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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WELCOME IN JAKARTA President Aquino pays his respects to the flags of the Philippines and Indonesia as he inspects the honor guard during Tuesday's welcome rites for him at the presidential palace in Jakarta. Mr. Aquino is in Jakarta for a state visit to discuss bilateral relations between the two countries. He flies to Singapore today for a two-day state visit. (Two story on Page A2.)

# Merci twists in the wind

LOST HORIZONS Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez points to something in the garden at the back of her office in Quezon City after reacting to the House committee on justice finding probable cause to impeach her for betrayal of public trust. The case against her now goes to plenary voting.

## SC junks Ombudsman appeal; House body votes to impeach

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Cynthia D. Rubino

OMBUDSMAN Merceditas Gutierrez was yesterday dealt heavy blows—the expected overwhelming vote of the House of Representatives' justice committee to forward the impeachment case against her for plenary voting, and the Supreme Court's dismissal of her appeal to stop the impeachment proceedings.

"It is a triumph of the people at this stage, an initial victory for the people in exercising their sovereign power to remove an accountable officer through impeachment," Iloilo Rep. Niel Tupas Jr., chair of the justice committee, told the In-

PHOTO, A6

## Unleaded gas shoots past ₱54 per liter

By Amy R. Remo, Kristine L. Alave and Maritoni Rondaldo

FOR THE third time in eight days, fuel prices went up on Tuesday morning as fighting in Libya escalated and soared to the Middle East protocol.

Oil firms raised prices of regular unleaded gasoline and diesel by ₱1.30 a liter and of kerosene by ₱1.25 a liter.

Unleaded gasoline is now retailed in metro Manila at ₱54 a liter and diesel at ₱48.50 a liter in Metro Manila.

Since the beginning of the year, oil firms have implemented eight rounds of price increases, resulting in a total increase of ₱6.75 a liter for gasoline and ₱6.50 for diesel.

This week's price increases were again due to an increase in

UNLEADED A-7

## 'I've done nothing wrong, this is partisan politics'

By Leila B. Salaverria

DESPITE a double whammy from the House of Representatives and the Supreme Court, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez yesterday insisted that she had done nothing wrong.

"What I am fighting for is that I did not violate any law or our Constitution. I did not do any thing that is not right [for] the people," Gutierrez told reporters.

She also said that she would abide by the Supreme Court ruling, and that she hoped the lawmakers would follow proper processes as well.

As for the House justice committee vote finding probable cause for her impeachment, she said she had been expecting it all along.

Gutierrez issued a statement later yesterday, saying that with the high vote in the panel, "there is nothing left for me but to face the impeachment complaint."

She called on the public to closely study the intent involved, and said the impeachment proceedings illustrated how one's reputation could be destroyed.

"This is definitely a time for the public to deeply discern the issues surrounding the impeachment proceedings as this shows how partisan politics and political harassment could destroy reputations and institutions and stop on people's con-

FULL STORY, A6

## Ash Wednesday: Turn away from sin

By Socrates B. Villegas
Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan

THE SEASON of Lent is a preparatory period for the celebration of Easter. Easter is the central point around which revolves the message of Christianity. If Christ did not rise from the dead, our faith would be meaningless, irrelevant and purposeless.

We open the season of Lent today by putting ashes on our foreheads as the Church administers us, "Turn away from sin and believe the Gospel."

Without God, nothing has value. Without God, we are nothing. With God, everything

ASH WEDNESDAY, A-21

**WHAT'S INSIDE**

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## 3 Contemplacion sons get life for selling drugs

By Marisar Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—The three sons of Filipina domestic worker Flor Contemplacion, who was executed in Singapore 16 years ago, have been sentenced to life imprisonment for selling illegal drugs, a court official said yesterday.

In a phone interview, Judge Agripino Morgia of Regional Trial Court Branch 32 in San Pablo City in Laguna province, said the three brothers were also fined ₱500,000 each in a 16-page decision he promulgated last week.

The brothers are Sanbros, 37, and twins Joel and Jun Jun, both 36.

They are the children of Contemplacion, who was hanged in Singapore in 1991 for the killings of fellow Filipina maid Delia Maga and her 3-year-old Singaporean ward Nicholas Huang.

CONTEMPLACION, A15

## Private folk earning ₱5M must file SALN by April 15

By Dianne L. Lucas

EVERY PRIVATE citizen earning at least ₱500,000 annually will now have to file the equivalent of a statement of assets and liabilities and net worth (SALN)—previously required only of public officials.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) said the new rule was meant to give legislators "the whole income picture of [an individual] taxpayer" and to help improve collections by clamping down on tax evasion.

The order, Revenue Regulation No. 3-2011, was signed and issued on March 1 by Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima.

Every citizen making at least ₱10,461 a month (amounting to receipts 13 months' worth of salaries each year) will be required to file a personal SALN to justify how he grows income to the BIR.

Beginning with the 2010 tax

PRIVATE, A-15

## *Bb. Pilipinas pageant lures more 'major, major' beauties*

By Armin Adina

ARE THERE many more Binibining Pilipinas? Organizers of the flickering Filipina beauty pageant believe so.

If in recent years only 24 candidates were selected by pageant organizers, 40 candidates were presented yesterday to members of the media at Solitel Philippine Palace in Pasay City.

BB. PILIPINAS, A-21

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

6/27
20 31
23 13
21 8

SUPERLOTTO 6/45
6 5 6 6 8 7

6/49 LUZ-VIS-MIN
3 5 9 21 24 39
P12,099,025.00

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
3 14 17 20 29 36
P32,391,054.00

# No Asean haven for terrorism

## We were wronged party in Spratlys, says expert

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE PHILIPPINES was the wronged party in the recent Reed Bank incident as President Aquino was wrong to have sent a government mouthpiece expert lobbying to dismiss the issue with Chinese officials, according to a law professor and international affairs expert.

China owed the Philippines an explanation, not the other way around, said Merlin Magallona, a former foreign affairs undersecretary who once teaches at the University of the Philippines law school.

"The Philippines is the aggrieved party. It should not have sent someone (to China) to explain. It should be the Chinese that should do the explaining. Why are we sending someone to explain to (them)?" he said.

### Scrambled to Reed Bank

The Air Force last March 2 deployed two jets to the Reed Bank, which is part of the Kalayaan Islands claimed by the Philippines in the disputed Spratlys group, after a Department of Energy oil exploration vessel was harassed and ordered to leave by two Chinese patrol boats. The Chinese boats left when the planes arrived.

Mr. Aquino last week said the government had filed a protest with the Chinese embassy but inexplicably added that the Philippines was sending a "Spratlys expert" to Beijing to discuss the issue with Chinese officials.

Senator Biazurabeg saw the Department of Foreign Affairs has been forthcoming about the identity of this so-called expert, and whether he or she has already left for China.

There is something wrong in the procedure, said Magallona.

He said there was already a breach of international obligation with the denial of leave by the Chinese boats early. Enough the incident did not escalate into violence.

### Threat of force

"The threat of force can be sufficient for a breach of international obligations under the United Nations charter," said Magallona.

In Beijing, China yesterday reiterated its claim over the entire Spratly island group, which it calls the Nansha islands, following protests from the Philippines and Vietnam over its naval activity in contested waters.

The reputedly oil-rich chain of tiny islands and reefs in the South China Sea is claimed in whole or in part by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam.

"China holds indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and their adjacent waters," Foreign ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu said reporters.

"We have been committed to dialogue and consultation to properly solve the South China Sea dispute and work with relevant countries to safeguard peace and stability in the South China Sea," she said.

She called on countries to exhaust one under the name "more complicated."

"We hope that other countries can respect and support efforts to peacefully resolve the disputes, to promote good neighborly friendship and peace and stability in the region," she said.

### 'Committed to peace'

Her words echoed the response of Chinese Embassy spokesperson Rhino Bautista last week to the Philippines protests. Bato said the Spratly the matter would be discussed through organizations while retaining China's claim to the entire Spratlys group.

Bato claimed Beijing "has been consistently sticking to the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and committed to maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea."

According to Magallona, Bato's statement was an "admission that the matter is under the regime of the absence of dispute" of the declaration that he was citing."

With AFP in Beijing

By Philip C. Tubeza

JAKARTA, Indonesia (via PLDT)—Saying Southeast Asia should not be a safe haven for terrorists, Indonesia and the Philippines yesterday pledged to boost cooperation in the fight against terror during the first visit here of President Aquino.

Mr. Aquino and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding that would improve intelligence gathering and sharing as well as training of security forces, and joint air and sea patrols.

Mr. Aquino is in Jakarta on the first leg of a two-nation tour of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) allies this week. Tomorrow, Mr. Aquino flies to Singapore.

In a joint press conference, Yudhoyono said the two countries have agreed on human trafficking, illegal migration, maritime boundaries to tackle "real and concrete" terrorist threats they both face.

"Terrorism has national, regional and global networks. In Southeast Asia, terrorists and their leaders have high mobility," he said.

"There must not be in Southeast Asia what is called a safe haven for terrorism," he said.

The Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), a regional terror group with links to the international al-Qaida terror network, is active in both the Philippines and Indonesia.

The JI, which has carried out a string of deadly bombings in Bali and Jakarta in the past decade, has members that reportedly trained in central Mindanao.

The group has also allied itself with the Abu Sayyaf bandit group in Jolo and a believed to have been involved in several bombings in Mindanao.

Mr. Aquino said that while intelligence and training exchanges between the security forces of the Philippines and Indonesia are ongoing, it would be "criminal on the part of governments of countries to refrain from entering into inflicting harm" not to explore all avenues to stop terrorists creeping here.

"If we are to treat them as isolated incidents, we are in effect strengthening their capacities to go in and out and inflict harm on different peoples," he said.

Mr. Aquino pointed to other transnational crimes that include illegal fishing, human trafficking, piracy, banking offenses and international economic crimes.

## 'Let Asean tackle sea incident'

By Philip C. Tubeza

JAKARTA, Indonesia (via PLDT)—Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono yesterday suggested that the Reed Bank incident involving the harassment of a Philippine oil exploration vessel by Chinese patrol boats could be dismissed at the upcoming meeting with East Asian leaders at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) leaders' summit to be hosted by Jakarta.

Speaking to reporters here with visiting President Aquino yesterday, Yudhoyono said he was hoping the South China Sea does not become "an area of open conflict."

"In Indonesia's view, if there is an unanimity of a relationship that we can agree on the issues of territories, I'm sure it is open for opportunities for cooperation and we desire we will hope that the South China Sea does not become a place of open conflict but in fact become a zone of potential economic cooperation," he later told reporters.

"That is my hope...since it will be resolved, the issue of South China Sea will bring benefits to the region and also to all of us," he added.

Aquino has previously briefed Mr. Aquino ruled out any "unilateral action" by the Philippines on the Reed Bank incident, saying joint exploration of the Spratlys with other claimant countries should continue.

"With regard to joint explorations, that is an idea that has been proposed a few times in the past but perhaps should resume on the table with other claimant countries. There is no room for unilateral action in that particular region," he said.

"Because if we did unilateral action, it does not resolve the issue. Hopefully, with the like-mind that this is a common problem and a common opportunity at the same time, we will be able to move a little bit more forward in terms of utilizing the resources in that particular region for the benefit of all the claimant nations," Mr. Aquino said.

## Midas: Forces doing smear job on high court

By Nikko Dizon

SUPREME Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez believes minister forces are about to put the high tribunal in a tail light, after a series of events that led to a near confrontation between himself and a senior justice.

"May I also state that it seems to me there is a concerted effort to discredit the court," said Marquez in a press conference yesterday.

Whatever the objectives of the anti-Supreme Court forces, Marquez said he is hopeful and hoped "that they would stop this attack of theirs on the court" as this would "not serve any purpose."

In a phone interview, Marquez said the leaks to the media not certain who were behind the efforts to besmirch the high court but that impeaching the justices would allow President Aquino to appoint new justices.

Marquez noted that coinciding with the threat by Davao Norte Rep. Rodolfo Fortuno to impeach the justices who voted to dismiss the petition for a temporary restraining order (TRO) filed by Datinelleman Merceditas Gutierrez on the impeachment proceedings against her in the House of Representatives was a news report that some magistrates had voted without reading Gutierrez's petition.

Marquez also said he would "rather not comment" on statements by presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda lambasting him for intending the stance of the Supreme Court and for "admitting" the tribunal was an "honeymoon."

"That is precisely what we did not like during the time of the former president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (when) Mr. Macapagal Arroyo (she) was able to appoint all the Supreme Court justices, hundreds (and) credible any more [They will say the court is not credible]," Marquez said.

Marquez said he was told by the clerk of court and he assumed that copies of the petition for quo warranto filed by the respondents (sent during the full court session on Sept. 16.

But after the high court dismissed Gutierrez's petition for a TRO, Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio and Associate Justice Ma. Lourdes Sereno said they were not given enough time to study the petition.

Asked about this in a press conference last week, Marquez replied that the magistrates had been given copies, based on what he had gathered from the clerk of court, the deputy clerk of court and two court en banc personnel who were assigned to distribute copies of the petition.

Lacierda on Tuesday said Marquez had unwittingly confirmed that the justices of the Supreme Court were beholden to Arroyo.

"At the same time that he's trying to vilify the President, he unwittingly admitted the present justices appointed by President Arroyo (comprise) an Arroyo court," Lacierda said in a news briefing in Malacañang. With a report from Norman Bordadora

APPEASING TAIWAN

# Palace welcomes FVR initiative

MALACAÑANG yesterday welcomed efforts of former President Fidel V. Ramos to help bring back good relations between the Philippines and Taiwan following their row over Manila's decision to deport 14 Taiwanese nationals wanted in credit fraud to mainland China.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said Ramos' trip to Taipei essentially was a personal trip of the former president.

"But certainly we welcome the efforts of former President Ramos in smoothing the relations between the Philippines and Taiwan," Lacierda told reporters.

Lacierda also said the Palace will study the recommendations that Mr. Ramos will give following his trip to Taiwan.

"If and when he reports to the President and offers some recommendations, certainly they would be studied," he said at a press briefing.

Ramos went to Taiwan for a five-day private trip last week to meet with Taiwanese Vice President Vincent Siew whom they both reportedly called on their respective governments to resolve the deportation row.

President Aquino had sent former Sen. Blas Ruiz to Taiwan last month to explain why Manila decided to deport the 14 Taiwanese nationals but Taipei demanded an apology from the Philippine government. The Philippines, which does not have official diplomatic relations with Taiwan, refused to apologize.

Christine O. Avendaño

SEE BACK PAGE
OF FIRST BUSINESS SECTION

# GOV'T WATCH

Serving and Protecting the Filipino Consumer

RAUL T. CONCEPCION
CONSUMER ADVOCATE

## GOVERNMENT MUST IMMEDIATELY STEP IN TO PROTECT THE CONSUMER AS THE UPRISING IN LIBYA AND OTHER MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES DRIVES OIL PRICES HIGHER

**As early as February 2, 2011**, we at GOV'T WATCH have repeated our call for an immediate review and amendment of the Oil Deregulation Law.

A call that we have been making years back during our time as Consumer & Oil Price Watch **(COPW)**.

A call that has, to this day, remained unheard.

**The Filipino consumer is defenseless against the current situation of the oil industry:** Non-uniform pricing benchmarks but similar pricing among the industry players, pump prices being adjusted a mere day or two after international market prices fluctuate.

**A SITUATION THAT THE OIL DEREGULATION LAW SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PREVENT.**

The growing unrest and upheaval in the Middle East and North Africa are making matters worse.

**The Oil Companies have used this situation as an excuse to implement another round of price increases** that have driven the prices of gasoline, diesel, and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) upwards by P1.25 per liter, P1 per liter, and P1.50 per kg respectively.

**GOV'T WATCH calls on DoE Secretary Jose Rene Almendras and DoJ Secretary Leila de Lima to immediately mobilize the DoE-DoJ Joint Task Force on Energy, implement the built-in safeguards of the Oil Deregulation Law, and address this worsening situation:**

1. **THE DOE MUST MAKE AN OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENT ON OIL PRICE BENCHMARKS.**

   The oil importers (Shell, Chevron, Total, and the New Players) and Petron (the only oil refiner) all show similar pump prices when they use different pricing benchmarks.

   The oil importers should be using Means of Platts Singapore (MOPS) as this is the benchmark used in the region. **I.e. Shell, Chevron, Total, Flying V, Eastern Petroleum and other small players.**

   Only Petron, as the only oil refiner, should be exempt from using MOPS as its pricing benchmark.

2. **The DoE-DoJ Joint Task Force must be aware of the actual inventories of the Oil Companies at all times.**

   To aid in the verification of oil inventories, the DoF through the Bureau of Customs should subject all oil importations to a pre-inspection scheme conducted by accredited third party inspection companies such as **SGS, COTECNA,** and **BUREAU VERITAS.**

3. **The DoE-DoJ Task Force must be mandated to announce to the public** the 15-day moving average price for the oil importers and the 45-day moving average price for the only oil refiner, Petron.

   **In Pilipinas Shell's full page ad on March 4, 2011 ("Understanding the Role of Stock Inventories in Oil Pricing"),** they raised the question of "how will they make the public accept a delayed price reduction, just because they have stocks bought at a high price?

   How will the public know what inventory levels and days they should wait before prices are reduced? Will the oil companies not be accused of delaying price reduction to make more money?"

   **We maintain that the public will be more receptive and less reactionary to what may be perceived as speculative or, at worst, predatory pricing by the oil companies if they are duly informed of product inventories and the moving average price.**

4. **The DoE-DoJ Task Force must be able to share their formulas and computations with the public** in detail and explain whether price increases are reasonable and fair.

5. **The DoE-DoJ Task Force should be imposed with the appropriate sanctions** if it does not comply with its mandated duties.

We **URGE** PNoy's administration to be proactive and act **NOW** before the oil price situation reaches crisis levels.

RAUL T. CONCEPCION
Chairman

***We want your comments or suggestions on this issue:***

***Do you agree or disagree that the Oil Deregulation law must immediately be reviewed, amended and implemented?***

***You may send your views and comments to GOV'T WATCH***
***via SMS: GLOBE 0935-9687777 and SMART 0948-7488888***
***via email: inbox@GOVTWATCH.net***
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# Women urged to press repeal of unequal laws

By Vincent Cabreza and Divine Cainas,
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Aurora Rep. Edgardo Angara yesterday urged women's groups to mount their campaign lobby yet to compel congress to remove what he called outdated laws that discriminate against women.

Angara made the call during the International Women's Day program here while thousands of women's rights advocates demonstrated in Manila to demand passage of a law to provide women full access to reproductive health services and information.

According to Angara, other antiwomen measures still in Philippine laws are the concubinage law and a revised penal code provision giving men the right to harm their wives if they catch them committing adultery.

### Unequal laws

Accepted legal premises make permissible a man's decision "to shoot his wife if he catches her in flagrante delicto (in the act of committing an offense) with another man, [but] there is no similar law permitting women [to shoot their husbands for the same incident]," he said.

Angara also cited a law prohibiting women from taking night-time duties, which has become outdated by the recruitment of female security guards and call center agents who work during the night.

The Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) gives Congress until 2012 to remove or amend outdated discriminatory laws, he said.

Angara praised the campaigns waged by the party-list groups Gabriela, Akbayan! Pinay and Alliance in pushing Congress to pass these laws.

He noted that licensed professionals in many fields are now dominated by women.

Despite the legislative advances, the Philippines may not be able to fulfill one of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals which is to reduce female and child mortality to 52 deaths for every 100,000 live births, he said.

The International Women's Day program in Baguio honored women achievers led by Philippine Air Force 2nd Lt. Janice Mechon, the top female graduate of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 2011 and a Baguio native. Also cited were activist Jovinna Castillo and cultural worker Rozella Rubio; teachers Gloria Leal, Leonarda Sputtudio and Angelita Padilla; economist leader Ruffina Cimene and Aurora Mendoza; and civic group leader Annabelle Ewayan.

### Women's march

A separate assembly ceremony led by Bayaluyog-Gabriela featured Gabriela women activists Leonora Mendoza, Irene Tumbocon, Bernice Ito, Jill Castillo, Marilou Bellaro, Mhel Macabool, Petra Medrano and Bridgie Cogaed.

In Manila, some 4,500 women's rights advocates scattered just inside at the Don Chino Roces (formerly Mendiola) bridge to mark the centennial of international women's day.

Members of Gabriela and other women's organizations denounced the "prevailing dismal condition of women."

# Gadhafi Air Force pounds rebels positions

BAB LAHUE, Libya—Libyan warplanes launched at least five new air strikes on Tuesday near rebel positions in the oil port of Ras Lanuf, keeping up a counteroffensive to prevent the opposition from advancing toward leader Moammar Gadhafi's stronghold in the capital Tripoli.

There was no immediate word on casualties, and an Associated Press reporter who witnessed the strikes said they did not appear to hit any fighters.

Representatives of the opposition, which controls the eastern half of Libya, said they have received an offer to negotiate the terms of Gadhafi's departure. However, they could not confirm whether the envoy who made the offer was authorized by the regime to do so and said in any case, they would not negotiate with the government.

Gadhafi's regime has been using its air power advantage since early July to clobber a rebel advance now toward Tripoli on the main highway. The increasing use of air power underlines the vulnerability of the rebel forces as they attempt to march in open terrain along the Mediterranean coast and could prompt would-be buyers to impose a no-fly zone over Libya to deny Gadhafi that edge.

### US to arm opposition?

The United States and its NATO allies signed deals on Monday to [illegible] military response to the escalating violence in Libya as the alliance boosted surveillance flights over the country and the Obama administration signaled it might be willing to help arm Gadhafi's opponents. Europe, meanwhile, took started international efforts to impose a no-fly zone.

On another front, a witness said Gadhafi loyalists had overpowered Tuareg, the city closest to Tripoli that had fallen into opposition hands.

The witness said hyphens that Gadhafi's [illegible] fighting vehicles were roaming the city Sebratenni most of Tripoli and firing randomly at homes.

On Monday, lightly armed rebels on Ras Lanuf swarmed on a Libyan jet fighter air overhead. Hour rebels pulled back to the city's oil refinery.

The bombing runs began in the morning, sending huge plumes of smoke into the air around 10 a.m. While every roar of a jet engine, the rebels opened fire with rebel assault of the every weapons available, from heavy artillery to pistols.

In the evening, a suspicious swooped low and [illegible] on two separate occasions dropped bombs from a heavily defended rebel checkpoint, striking a car carrying a family and sending rebel fighters fleeing for cover in chaotic scenes.

There were conflicting reports about the casualties after the air strikes. Witnesses had said a man died when the car he was driving was hit in a [illegible] and said the man, along with four relatives, survived.

**The deadly attacks from the air helped further turn the momentum of the conflict in eastern Libya, where opposition fighters had made strong military gains in their drive to the west, toward Sirt, a Gadhafi stronghold, and on to Tripoli.**

### Troops on outskirts

But on Sunday troops loyal to Gadhafi retained the town of Bin Jawwad, just to the west of Ras Lanuf, backed by fierce air power, and near the fighting is into reverse.

Those troops remained on the outskirts of Ras Lanuf on Monday evening, taking to immediate steps to try to reorganize it as its strategic role.

Some of the rebels, who took control three days ago to their unwanted push.

In addition, the elite Khamis Brigade continued on Monday to batter Zawiya with tanks, artillery and snipers, residents there said.

"With cell phone and Internet communication cut off, virtually the only source of information on events there was a line reporter for MTV TV, a British television channel.

She said the heavily armed government troops attacked in the morning and inexplicably withdrew after several hours, even though their tanks remained to have taken control of the city's central square.

Government forces also attacked the rebel-held city of Misurata, Libya's third largest 160 km east of Tripoli.

### No-fly zone

The rebels have rejected any foreign invasion of the country but would welcome a no-fly zone, saying they can handle Gadhafi's soldiers, tanks and warfare, but not his warplanes and helicopter gunships.

On Monday, Britain and France said they would seek United Nations authority for a no-fly zone, but Russia, which holds veto power, has already rejected any form of military intervention.

The US ambassador to NATO, Ivo Daalder, said the organization had established 24-hour surveillance of Libya with drones reconnaissance aircraft.

In Geneva, the United Nations appealed for $160 million for an operation over the next three months to prepare shelter, food, medicine and transportation in fighting widened and more than a million people fleeing or inside the country needed humanitarian aid. Reports from New York Times News Service and AP.

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## De Lima stands by DOJ probers of Stradcom case

By Nikko Dizon

JUSTICE Secretary Leila de Lima yesterday brushed aside claims by Virginia Torres that is joined that incommunicado in the custody of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) chief for supporting the takeover of the agency's IT provider by schools factions had been framed.

"It is unsustainable that instead of resorting or responding fairly or persuasively to the results of the findings, the report and recommendations on the Stradcom takeover, the LTO official involved and one of the factions involved would rather cast aspersions on the integrity and sense of responsibility or objectivity of the committee," De Lima said.

The justice secretary told a news conference she was "standing by the integrity and competence" of Justice Undersecretary Francisco Baraan, chair of the fact-finding committee and its members.

She also stressed that contrary to the claims of Torres, the LTO chief was given due process throughout the investigation.

### Less than forthright

De Lima said Torres was "less than forthright" when the latter said she was dismissed the process.

"She said Torres had already appeared before the committee and said she was submitting herself to its jurisdiction.

But the LTO chief later ignored summons and simply sent three letters and later asked for the invitation of the hearings, De Lima said.

"She was accorded due process," she said, adding that Torres was not required to file a counter-affidavit because the committee was engaged in gathering facts and was not conducting a preliminary investigation.

De Lima appointed the Baraan panel to recommendation that Torres be suspended for her failure to stop the forcible takeover of the Stradcom office inside the LTO compound in Quezon City last Dec. 2 and Dec. 9 that stemmed from an intervention controversy.

The investigation also recommended that Torres had chosen partiality in the issue, by siding with one faction of Stradcom led by Aderito Yujuico and Bonifacio Mandilla in their attempt to take control of the facility.

Yujuico and Mandilla were the owner boundary partners of Stradcom president Cesar Quintelino.

De Lima said the Baraan panel's report had been endorsed to President Aquino and Transportation Secretary Jose de Jesus and that it would be up to them to decide whether they would adopt the recommendation.

### Corporate controversy

De Lima had asked the parties do put limit to threat quite the liability of LTO officials in the forcible takeover of the Stradcom office as the incident stalled the services of LTO for several hours last month.

De Lima also said Baraan and the committee would have asked with any of the factions to breakdown as they were not investigating the misconduct case sweep. However, the justice department has "no jurisdiction" over the particular issue, she added.

### Takeover is issue

"The issue is just about the takeover. The issue was purely factual. What did Asec. Torres or any other LTO official do or not do to address that takeover? So that's the case factual issue. The second factual issue is to assess the evidence about that and other LTO officials were involved in this takeover? Those questions were sufficiently addressed in the report and recommendation of the committee," De Lima said.

Under a 15.6-billion contract that the LTO signed in 1998 with Stradcom, the American contractor was supposedly entrusted all the agency's 250 district offices and operated a database of registered vehicles and license holders.

Stradcom also holds the joint concessionary quotas between the LTO and Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority. The contract expires in 2013.

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## Gov't panel clears Torres in Pajero scam

By Michael Rubinet

VIRGINIA Torres, the chief of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and shooting range buddy of President Aquino, may bounce a raph of relief... as Bossi has seen.

An interagency task force looking into alleged anomalies in the agency's procurement of motor vehicles and other personnel were involved in the theft incidents has cleared former commissioner Torres of any [illegible] wrongdoing.

Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said yesterday said that the Joint Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Department of Justice (DOJ) panel [illegible] indicted Torres of charges she had been facilitating the registration of stolen vehicles.

"We're clearing her in the sense that we do know that she was not responsible for registering the vehicle," Robredo told reporters in Camp Crame.

"Let's be very clear on that," Robredo said. "It was really clear that the registration was done by the predecessor of Torres. So very likely, there was a presumption that the registration papers were from when these were[illegible]."

Straight for comment, Robredo said, "I was confident that I would be cleared because there were no basis for linking me to carjackers. Nobody has even attributed to or even me of any wrongdoing."

A Feb. 2 report from the Highway Patrol Group (HPG) showed that Torres, who was named LTO chief last July by Mr. Aquino, was among the 20 CPG and police personnel facing administrative and criminal charges in connection with activities of car dealers.

The report was released until a public uproar over the grisly murders of car dealers Wenson Evangelista and Emerson Lozano, which police claimed is going allegedly led by the brothers Roger and Raymond Dominguez, both were under PNP custody.

Curiously, the DOJ has yet to act on the criminal complaint filed by the HPG on May 7, 2008, against Torres in connection with the registrations of the 9 plate using papers purportedly in the name of Torres.

Asked about this, Robredo said, "I think our conclusion will be the same."

"While it was true that the serial number of the original registration of the Pajero was taken from a motorcycle, she only signed the renewal of an old registration," he told reporters in the sidelines of the Kapihan sa Camp Crame. (See story in Metro, Page A20.)

"Was she in a position to verify the previous registrations? That's the question there. When she signed those documents, I think there was a presumption of regularity," he added.

Robredo said the panel might recommend Torres' prosecution in connection with certain Director Leandro, to explain the issues.

As to Torres' alleged role in the registration of stolen vehicles, he said, "I don't think she was involved in that. I think other people are."

Robredo said the committee recommended the filing of criminal charges against 19 LTO officials in Malolos, Bocaue, Bulacan, and Davao province, who allegedly facilitated the registration of the Mitsubishi Pajero using spurious documents.

He said the task force furnished Mr. Aquino and Justice Secretary Leila de Lima copies of its report.

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The good guys!

# Merci twists in the wind: SC junks her appeal

From page A1

system all on the breaking.

### Same arguments for GMA

House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman and other Gutierrez defenders used the arguments that they themselves rejected when they blocked the series of impeachment complaints against then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, including the argument that the impeachment process was not merely a political exercise but should allow to be grounded on evidence, like a court trial.

The voting was preceded by a four-hour debate on whether impeachment was a mere matters game and whether Gutierrez had been given due process by the justice committee, with the pro-Gutierrez contending the only issue was if there is a prima facie case.

Gutierrez and her lawyer were not present. But they submitted two letters to the committee yesterday and on March 4 to deny the charges, accompanied by what Lagman described as "two-foot high documents." These were also described by a committee member as an "obstruction of justice."

### Probable cause

The committee voted 39-9, with Lagman abstaining, to find probable cause to impeach Gutierrez based on the complaint filed by a group led by former Ilocos Rep. Abel Ilustrisimo.

In that complaint, Gutierrez was cited for her "unconscionable" conviction not to cause in during the graft charges filed against Arroyo and her husband on their involvement in the $329-million MRT-3 deal and the unexplained wealth of Mike Arroyo. Philip Pichay, Ilocos Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas, the committee vice chair, said his "yes" vote did not mean the Ombudsman became he felt the Ombudsman had acted on it.

The committee voted 39-9, again with Lagman abstaining, on the impeachment complaint filed by a group led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan's Renato Reyes, which assailed the Ombudsman for her purported connection with the PCIJ and Inquirer.net links and with the "Gene Ampatuan" scandal, and the Hyatt Hotel's electronic connect with the Commission on Elections which the Supreme Court had voided.

Tupas said he supposed the committee members to report and articles of impeachment to the House March 14, with the plenary debate expected to start by March 28 or 29.

### Public accountability

He told reporters in a press conference after the hearing that he expected the impeachment complaint to be approved by March 22 or 23.

In an interview, Tupas said he was pleased with the result of the voting as it allowed the people's belief in public accountability.

He said the high court's decision dismissing Gutierrez's motion for reconsideration at the time when the committee was about to vote on the finding of probable cause was timely.

"In effect, the Supreme Court is sending the message that it is supporting the process and is sending the people's power of impeachment through Congress," he said.

### Same SC vote

In a press conference, Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said the justices' vote rejecting Gutierrez's appeal was the same.... 7-3, 8—as when they dismissed her petition on Feb. 15.

"That means that the House can proceed with its impeachment proceedings against Chief Justice Gutierrez. Antagonistic sa kanila ang kanilang magiging desisyon (Their decision will be antagonistic to Gutierrez)," Marquez said.

Those who dissented were Chief Justice Renato Corona and Associate Justices Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, Arturo Brion, Diosdado Peralta and Lucas Bersamin.

Associate Justices Jose Perez and Jose Catral Mendoza had partially concurred with the majority. Associate Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr. inhibited because his son, Municipal Rep. Lord Allan Velasco, is a member of the House justice committee.

Marquez said he had pointed that the justice committee violated the constitutional provision that only one impeachment proceeding may be filed against a public official in a year.

Marquez said the high court's decision upheld the House's power to draft the impeachment rules that governed the assailed trial in the Senate in 2000 of Ilocos Presidents Joseph Estrada.

"The Senate movements are in accord with the House," Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III said in an interview, indicating that the upper chamber was ready to act once there was an impeachment court. "There will be due process."

Under Senate rules, the article of impeachment are referred to the committee on rules, chaired by Sotto, and the committee report is then shunted by Sen. Francis Escudero.

Sotto said the Senate would await the final House action on Gutierrez, before adopting the impeachment rules "so as not to preempt" the latter's actions.

He said the rules that governed Estrada's impeachment trial would be adopted but the upper chamber should first resolve whether to allow the senator-judges to ask witnesses questions directly or through the presiding officer, he said.

"I raise those points in order to impress on the leadership the need to decide right at the moment on justice and to jettison the irreconcilable sense of due process," he said.

### 'Mero-mero'

But Pichay said the committee had extensively all necessary, debates available to Gutierrez even if she had repeatedly insulted the impeachment hearings as a "mero-mero" (farce).

Nacionalista Iloilo Rep. Raul Daza said Gutierrez invoked due process only when it was convenient for her.

Isabela Rep. Georgidi Aggabao, who was deputized by South Cotabato Rep. Daisy Fuentes, said that even if the charges were "provisionally granted as true," they would not be considered impeachable offenses.

"The decision of the committee was arbitrary and I predict the case will last over a night sitting in the Senate," Aggabao added.

While the 62 members of the Liberal Party have agreed to vote as one in the plenary voting, the Nacionalist People's Coalition has allowed its 30 members to vote according to their conscience, according to Bukidnon Rep. Juan Cua Sabilani.

### 6 out of 10

The justice committee panel denies the first complaint, saying most of the cases could not be used as basis for impeachment, such as the "double-cross" of Arroyo at a women's rally and weakened the three charges in the second complaint.

Tupas said the two complaints would soon be consolidated under the articles of impeachment to be prepared by the panel of the trial of public trust, and would carry only six... three each from the two complaints—of the original 10 allegations.

"We will arrange the order accordingly as well," he theorized in the plenary," Deputy Speaker Lorenzo Tañada III said. "We decided that we will look more at the strength of each ground and we feel that these are the strongest grounds that are easy terms in the Senate to prove that Ombudsman Gutierrez can be impeached."

Tupas said the committee's work was over.

"As far as the committee on justice is concerned, we're already satisfied our committee's mood duty. We have voted and found the existence of probable cause in the complaints against Merceditas Gutierrez for betrayal of public trust," he said.

At the press conference, Tupas said he had asked members of the committee who would help him draft the committee report and the articles of impeachment—Daza, Tañada, Pichay, Deputy Minority Rep. Reynaldo Umali, Democratic Rep. Neptali Gonzales II, Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares, and Akbayan Rep. Kaka Bag-ao.

He said he would recommend to Speaker Feliciano Belmonte that the seven also be named to the 11 member panel that would prosecute the impeachment complaint in the House should the House plenary affirm the committee report.

### Veiled threat

At the hearing, Muntinlupa Rep. Rino Quimbo, one of four senior committee members who have charges pending in the Office of the Ombudsman, lamented what he claimed was an irresponsible attack on their reputation by Gutierrez's allies.

Quimbo said he was "disheartened" by the release of the video of impeachment yes," he said.

### Campaign promise

Jreden and Sen. Ralph Recto acknowledged that Mr. Aquino's "marching orders" to his Liberal Party mates in impeach Gutierrez should be used in the minutes of his campaign vow to root out corruption.

"The President has taken a party position and he believes that campaign promise, 'where there is no corruption, there is no poverty,' would call for the impeachment of the Ombudsman. That is the goal, that has he has announced," Jreden said.

A two-thirds vote of the 24 member Senate, or 16 votes, are needed to convict in an impeachment trial.

Jreden said Gutierrez still had the option to ask the Supreme Court to stop the impeachment trial but she should present a strong legal basis to back this up.

"In me, it will be a supreme error to remain the Senate from doing its constitutionally mandated obligation," Jreden said on the phone.

### 'Fiercely independent'

Sen. Gregorio Honasan said Mr. Aquino's call for his allies to impeach Gutierrez "smacks of partisanship."

But Honasan said he believed it would not impair the collective decision of the Senate, whose members, he said, were "fiercely independent."

Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. said that while impeachment was a political process, "the decision should not be made on a political basis, a partisan basis whether when it comes."

"In the Senate, we will not be dictated [on], not by the President or any of our party colleagues," Marcos said.

Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Ponce Enrile earlier assured Gutierrez that "she will be given due process here in the Senate."

Malacañang said Mr. Aquino's "moral leadership" helped spur the House justice committee decision to elevate the Ombudsman impeachment case to the plenary.

### Moral leadership

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda reiterated that only the House justice committee are acting on that, after the Supreme Court's move to junk Gutierrez's appeal to stop the proceedings against her.

Lacierda said the House and the Senate could now move forward in the impeachment case "without any fear of being reversed" by the high court.

Lacierda also said that "certainly the President, with his moral leadership in determining the course for good governance, helped in a large measure also in the [House committee's] decision."

Asked whether the President gave his allies "marching orders" to impeach Gutierrez, Lacierda said: "It's more of a reminder to the Liberal Party of the good responsibility they have toward good governance."

He denied that the President violated the law on separation of powers when he made those statements to his allies. With reports from Christine O. Avendaño

## *Senate has time for Merci until May*

By TJ Burgonio

EVEN IF the House of Representatives votes to impeach Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez soon, the Senate would likely begin her impeachment trial only in May given its tight schedule, sometime mid-summer.

They also said that the upper chamber would adopt the impeachment rules that governed the aborted trial in the Senate in 2000 of then President Joseph Estrada.

"The Senate movements are in accord with the House," Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III said in an interview, indicating that the upper chamber was ready to act once there was an impeachment court. "There will be due process."

Under Senate rules, the article of impeachment are referred to the committee on rules, chaired by Sotto, and the committee report is then shunted by Sen. Francis Escudero.

Sotto said the Senate would await the final House action on Gutierrez, before adopting the impeachment rules "so as not to preempt" the latter's actions.

He said the rules that governed Estrada's impeachment trial would be adopted but the upper chamber should first resolve whether to allow the senator-judges to ask witnesses questions directly or through the presiding officer, he said.

### More transparent

At Estrada's trial, a senator-judge was allowed two written to propound questions. Some said he preferred the original proposal that questions be submitted to and read by the presiding officer.

He said this would help resolve questions in the public mind on the senator-judges' partiality or impartiality.

As soon as the articles of impeachment are transmitted to the Senate, the senators may adopt the rules either in session or in plenary according to them.

"It can take an hour, a day or two," he said.

Once the rules are adopted, the senators would constitute themselves into a court but could not begin the trial yet until after seven days of publication of the rules, Sotto said.

Asuncion, after taking their oaths as judges, the senators have to read the articles of impeachment to the respondent for her reply and this will take days, he said.

### Long process

In case the House transmits the articles of impeachment next week, the Senate can immediately convene as a court. But if these are sent in the week before it adjourns for the Holy Week, the senators won't start until May, Sotto said.

Congress adjourns on March 25 and resumes session on May 9.

Given the long process it would take the House to prepare the justice committee report and debate on it, the voting is delayed, it is unlikely the Senate can convene as a court before the break, Sen. Franklin Drilon said.

"I don't think there will be enough time to convene as an impeachment court before adjournment. The schedule is tight and we have not adopted the rules of impeachment yet," he said.

### Campaign promise

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"The President has taken a party position and he believes that campaign promise, 'where there is no corruption, there is no poverty,' would call for the impeachment of the Ombudsman. That is the goal, that has he has announced," Jreden said.

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He denied that the President violated the law on separation of powers when he made those statements to his allies. With reports from Christine O. Avendaño

## *'I've done nothing wrong, this is partisan politics'*

From page A1

still ethically guaranteed rights," she said, adding:

"My conscience is clean. I will continue to perform my duties as I have been doing these past years to the best of my ability and knowledge. I hope that our honorable legislators will see the light of reason and justice in my case."

Gutierrez also assailed President Aquino for calling the Ombudsman's inaction a reason to impeach her.

"It is sad that the President himself has openly rallied his allies in the House ... to impeach me, and as reported, the House justice committee has found probable cause and endorsed the two impeachment complaints filed against me," she said.

### CBCP forum

Before the high court's decision, Gutierrez appeared publicly, and as the justice committee was preparing to vote on whether the two impeachment complaints should be forwarded for plenary debate, Gutierrez told a Forum held by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and the Catholic Media Network that she had no intention of shoring up at the House.

"I still have a pending motion for reconsideration at the Supreme Court. The question is one why I still not attend the congressional hearing, but why [the committee] cannot wait for the high court to issue a ruling," she said in Filipino.

Gutierrez said the impeachment proceedings were but "a political exercise," and that she would not be surprised if the committee voted for probable cause.

She said that should the case be returned to the Senate, she would attend the trial there.

She scoffed at Muntinlupa Rep. Rino Quimbo's statement that she was trying to cause at least four consecutive sessions with pending issues or her office by naming them publicly.

"They're the ones who are relying on many me. I was asked by the media to name them, so I did," she said.

Gutierrez continued to deny that she was violated the Constitution and betrayed public trust by delaying "big fish" graft and corruption cases.

"There is no truth to that. I just let the evidence speak for itself. I have not touched or held any document to decide on or delay cases," she said.

### Face the music

Also present at the forum were former Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Joker Arroyo, respected for Gutierrez's decision to boycott the impeachment proceedings, and he thought it would be best if she "face[d] the music against [her]."

Asked by Gutierrez if it was fair for Mr. Aquino to engage his party mates to vote for her impeachment, Pimentel said: "If there is a complaint about a public official, they should be held accountable. He use it in their names on Monday by Salvador Panelo, lawyer and spokesperson of Gutierrez, in denial of presenting evidence on behalf of his client.

"I am led to think that the resolution by the Ombudsman's counsel on pending cases before the Ombudsman is but a veiled threat designed to coax members not to vote in favor of respondent herein," said Quimbo, a deputy majority leader and vice chair of the committee.

"I find it suspicious that he mentions that more than 50 percent of members of Congress have cases pending before the Ombudsman, but he only reveals to the media the names of the top four officers of the House of Congress. I find this highly suspicious, especially considering that it was done on the eve of today's voting," he said.

Quimbo later delivered a privilege speech on the matter in the plenary session in the afternoon.

The other three committee members with pending cases in the Office of the Ombudsman are Tupas, Fariñas and Umali.

They also had a "hoodlit light" with Gutierrez, who took a few bites of a meal of rice, spareribs and grilled bangus.

Gutierrez said she was very saddened by the show of support, and added she appreciated it because it was coming from those who know her.

Last night, Gutierrez and her supporters attended a Mass offered for her.

After the Mass, she thanked those who continued to believe in her and said she was happy about their presence.

She said Tuesday was a day she would never forget, and added that it was a time that she needed moral support.

### Historic moment

But one of the complainants against Gutierrez said she did not have much of a chance.

Renato Reyes of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Gutierrez's defiance would lead to sooner Gutierrez should the articles of impeachment reach the Senate.

He said the evidence, coming from the Senate and the Commission on Audit, contained damning evidence.

"We are in the throes of a historic moment in the fight to make our public officials and institutions accountable. As complainants, we vote to use this struggle to the end and expect vigilant support from every stage of the process. Gutierrez's days as Ombudsman are numbered," Reyes said in a statement. With reports from Jaymee T. Gamil

# AFP chief hits ground running

NEWLY APPOINTED Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr. hit the ground running on his first day in office and immediately ordered the senior commanding officers and troops to...

In his first command conference in Camp Aguinaldo on Monday, Oban summed up his directives in the acronym RPMO which stands for reforms, peace, modernization and morale and welfare.

"These are the instructions he relayed to the commanders. There were timelines given to them. The reforms should be felt immediately," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jose Mabanta Jr. told reporters Monday.

In his command conference speech, Oban had promised to hold himself and all officers accountable for the proper use of funds amid allegations that AFP funds were diverted in the past to boost...

On Monday reforms, Oban directed... managers, specifically the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (J4) and the Insurance Management Office to review existing mechanism to eliminate opportunities for fund misuse.

Malaysia said the relation... travel on logistics and procurement and confidential matters.

"This is one of the few times when an instruction to look into this has been given. We are amid a brewing controversy brought by the Reform request," Mabanta added, referring to former military budget officer Brig. Gen. George Rabusa.

Oban also empowered the Office of the Internal Auditor to oversee the projected reforms.

On peace, he ordered a program... to have soldiers have taken the new enacted amnesty and rebellion law since its implementation last Jan. 7. He also wants a concrete AFP-Mamasapano Action Plan.

On the modernization program, Oban ordered the AFP Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for plans (J5) to review the military's force structure and capability development program to make it more responsive.

Dona Pazzibugan

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# Strike threat won't affect flights—PAL

By Paolo G. Montecillo

PHILIPPINE Airlines (PAL) has assured passengers its labor problems would not affect operations.

In a statement, the flag carrier said flights would continue to follow published schedules and all ticket offices and other facilities in the PAL system would maintain regular operations.

The company also announced its first...send flight on Tuesday to pick up Filipinos who had escaped from the turmoil in Libya.

PAL said it would use its flagship Boeing 777 jet for the repatriation flights. The aircraft will fly to Cebu to evacuate to pick up the Filipinos there who were also...from Libya.

The airline said it was able to obtain a special permit on fly to Greece despite a ban on Philippine carriers flying to Europe.

## Downgrade

The ban was imposed several years ago when Philippine aviation was downgraded by international aviation rating agencies on safety concerns.

"PAL in working the understanding of passengers who may experience slight delays as the airline adjusts its schedules to give way to special flights for the repatriation of Filipinos fleeing the unrest in Libya," the company said.

PAL, meanwhile, said it would not send Mahalaxshmy resolves in pending labor issues before returning to the negotiating table on hazmone on a new collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with the PAL Employees Association (Palea).

On Monday, Palea filed a notice of strike...the second this year...after PAL management refused to negotiate a new CBA with the ground crew union.

PAL president and COO Jaime Bautista said Palea should give Mahalaxshmy due respect and a free hand in resolving the spinoff issue which Palea itself brought up to the Palace on appeal.

He said Mahalaxshmy's decision on the contracting issue would have a material impact on a CBA since any agreement would contradict those employees he left behind, should the Palace uphold the airline management.

# LED leads way to saving energy

By Julie M. Aurelio

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia—From a green perspective, using the cheaper conventional light bulbs could end up being more costly than using their LED (light-emitting diode) because the incandescent bulb is less energy efficient.

Consumers, however, are often distracted from buying LEDs because they cost more than even fluorescent lamps, according to a senior Philips official.

"If we don't work on (promoting LEDs) it would be bad for energy efficiency efforts, because it might be too late," said Olivier Pierrès, senior vice president of Philips Lighting.

Pierrès addressed a press conference at the Lembah Cilios Sunsuai hotel here recently dubbed "Moving Beyond: Sustaining Quality Through Growth."

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Assistant Editor Tony Benjamin

Across the NATION

# City mayors warn SC of impeachment

## 3 legislators ask group to stop 'bullying' high tribunal over new cities

By DJ Yap and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

CITY MAYORS yesterday issued a virtual ultimatum for the Supreme Court to correct what they called its error in recognizing the status of 16 new cities, hinting at the possibility of filing impeachment cases against the justices.

The League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) said it would file a motion for reconsideration today asking the high tribunal to reverse its "flip-flop" ruling on the manner of the income bailout to cities cut by Feb. 11, when it surprised what was thought to be its final decision rejecting the shipload of the 16.

Mandaluyong City Mayor Herman Tengonca, LCP secretary general and a leader of the protest, said impeachment became is an option available to the LCP.

San Fernando City, Pampanga Mayor Oscar Rodriguez said the justices "will have a chance to correct this mistake."

"Never in the history of jurisprudence in this or for impeachment, we do not know," said Rodriguez.

At least three legislators, however, said the LCP should stop "bullying" the SC.

Representatives Eduardo Gullas of Cebu, first districtwo of Eastern Samar and Jonathan Limkaichong of Negros Oriental said the 5th, 11 court decision was simply a recognition of Congress' power.

"I trust that the justices will really stand their ground this time," said Gullas. "It will really look bad if the SC will reverse their judgment again because of those bullying tactics."

Since the June convening the 16 municipalities into cities were passed and enacted in 2007, the Supreme Court has issued four decisions—first, to declare the law unconstitutional in January 2008; next, to reverse itself in December 2009; then, to reverse itself anew and declared the laws unconstitutional in August 2010; and the latest was on Feb. 11.

"They claimed there was flip flopping among the SC justices but there was none," said Gullas.

The LCP argued that the 16 municipalities were not qualified for conversion into cities in terms of population, income and land area.

Mayor Rodriguez, however, said reducing 122 cities would be too much as P1.7 billion in their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) if the status of the 16 as cities were recognized.

He said the issue was about equity saying that a city like Davao had a population bigger than the populations of all 16 municipalities combined, and if they were recognized as cities, Davao's per capita spending would only be half of theirs.

Bragaisa said the original Supreme Court decision requiring the cityhood of the 16 was "not only final and executory, but has already been executed."

He said the IRA shares that were supposed to go to the 16 have already been retained in the LGU civics, and that, during the 2010 elections, the Commission on Elections had treated the 16 as towns, not cities.

Former Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, author of the Local Government Code, threw his support behind the LCP saying he did not understand why the high court had flip-flopped on its decision.

PABLO Luspilla Jr.'s work restoring helicopter engines saves the government at least P34 million a year.

## Mechanic saves chopper engines, ₱34M a year

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK FREEPORT—Earning a base monthly salary of P23,336, less taxes, aircraft mechanic Pablo Luspilla Jr. may not even be aware he saves P34 million a year for the government or that he saves lives daily.

Luspilla keeps aging aircraft of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) flying, mainly Vietnam War vintage Huey helicopters that PAF mechanics combine, rewire and refurbish to give them new lives.

Instead of spending at least P34 million a year for outsourced aircraft maintenance labor, government saves this much because Luspilla and colleagues in the 753 Squadron restore helicopter engines.

They fit engines with new parts or sent their shop at the PAF's 410th Maintenance Wing at the Air Base City have earlier done ship these abroad for repair, said Lt. Col. Wilfredo Sanchez, commander of the 410th Maintenance Production Group.

Assigned here, Luspilla is known as "the hermit expert" for overhauling Huey engines, said Sanchez.

Saluting his crucial role in the PAF, the Civil Service Commission conferred on Luspilla, 49, the Presidential Lingkod Bayan Award in 2015.

"President Duterte told me, 'Ok, I learned that if not for you, no Hueys would fly,' [said the President]. 'You really like.' And we laughed," he recalled of his brief conversation with Mr. Aquino during rites in Malacañang on October last year.

The Department of National Defense also cited Luspilla as an exemplary employee in November.

While the squadron has eight civilian aircraft mechanics—not the last five years to high-paying jobs abroad, Luspilla stayed in PAF with which he has worked for 17 years now.

Just how serious is he about safety? "I still think about the engines even when I'm home," he said.

Just as difficult as his daily work is was Luspilla's struggle to get an education.

Born in Sagbayan, Bohol, his father died a living out as a porter in a pier. His mother devoted her time rearing eight children.

"I finished high school but I never got to enter college because there was no [more]. I took odd jobs, worked as a messenger. When my father got sick and became I was the second man in the family. I left for Metro Manila to support my entire family. I was 21 years old then," he said.

He landed a full-time job as a messenger. In between, he nursed a dream to become an aircraft mechanic, which started when he was a boy marvelling at how planes fly.

Architect Ricardo Solitario, who played basketball with him on weekends, told him about a job opening in the firm of another architect, Fronesa Cadena, who was desperate for a draftsman.

"I didn't care if he was like a flutist boy for as long as he would help me go back to school," Luspilla said of Cadena, who hired him on the spot.

The man, Luspilla realized, was kind to employees who diligent by did their duties.

"He trained me well. He said he admired me for my determination in life. He lent me money for tuition and allowed me to leave me home early so I would be in school on time," he said, adding fondly of Cadena, whose act of kindness changed his life.

He borrowed money that he paid through his salary, he enrolled at the College of Aeronautics of the Philippine Air Transport and Training Services (PACTS). It took him seven years, instead of four, to get his bachelor of science degree in aircraft technology in October 1993.

He learned from observing his civilian supervisors—Ernesto Portillo and Rolando Cosmos—in his three years of on the job training with the 410th Maintenance Wing, then housed in the Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

In 1997, the PAF hired him as a permanent aircraft mechanic. In 2001, PAF promoted him aircraft Mechanic II, counting him mid-of civilian employees in 2009. The AFP chose him as model civilian employee in 2009.

"Up to now, he reads the technical manuals to take a dislike to comply with standards. He really has patience," said Lieutenant Colonel Sanchez.

The 754-million annual saving it based on the number of engines overhauled for the period and the costs of outsourced labor abroad, he said.

"Luspilla's got the skills and technical knowledge. He's the foremost expert at TSS," said the mechanic's immediate supervisor, 1st Lt. Reynante Buenaventura.

"He's dedicated and loyal," said Ismael Tarano, a civilian mechanic whose specialization is fixing rotor blades.

Sanchez said Buenaventura said Luspilla was diagnosed with minimal pulmonary tuberculosis.

But while the hazard of work has taken its toll on Luspilla's health, civilian aircraft mechanics like him in the PAF are not entitled to hazard pay.

## Skills upgrade, new guns for PNP

By Marlon Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The Calabarzon police is continuing a skills upgrading program for policemen that would include the purchase of new firearms to be handled by Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno, a director general said.

The Calabarzon PNP yesterday went on the second phase of its SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) skills upgrade training and shoot fest as part of continuing preparations for crisis situations that followed the Aug. 15, 2014, bloody hostage taking at the Luneta in Manila.

The bloody event led to a review of PNP and local government preparedness in handling similar crisis situations. It also led to a protocol prepared by Chief Supt. Aminud Hajjikhan that is now being used by the Department of Interior and Local Government as model for crisis handling by LGUs and local police nationwide.

Hajjikhan earlier said the protocol is more enriched in Metro Manila where the chances of a similar crisis taking place was highest.

According to Hajjikhan, aside from the purchase of new equipment for PNP, Puno was also considering the PNP's arsenal of weapons for "interchangeability."

In his speech at the Philippine National Police Academy, Puno failed to give details on the type of the new firearms, but a former SWAT official said a SWAT member equipped with "Tavor" guns would cost the government at least P600,000.

Hajjikhan said the government is studying how to speed up the procurement process without violating existing rules.

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# P-Noy stops LGU tax collection on power firm

By Dollie T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA, CITY—President Aquino has issued an executive order stopping officials of Quezon province from collecting alleged unpaid taxes from the operator of a coal-fired plant in Pagbilao town, drawing an appeal from provincial officials for reconsideration.

Mr. Aquino issued last Feb. 28 Executive Order No. 27 that ordered and condoned real property taxes allegedly owed by power firm Team Energy (TE) to the provincial government and local government of Pagbilao for operating a 735-megawatt coal plant in the town.

Local government officials of Quezon appealed to Mr. Aquino to withdraw the EO.

A TE official, however, said the EO relieved its tax liabilities owed by the National Power Corp. and Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management, not TE.

Gregory Romualdez, vice president for external affairs of TE, said his company is "a responsible corporate citizen that has an excellent track record of paying all its rightful tax obligations to a timely manner."

"We have every intention of keeping it that way," he said in the statement.

Some mayors of Quezon town, however, said their fight to collect the taxes isn't over.

Catanauan Mayor Ramon Orfanel said he would call for an emergency meeting of the Quezon Mayors' League, which he heads.

Mr. Aquino's EO effectively stopped a plan by the Quezon provincial government to auction off pieces of property owned by TE supposedly to pay.

The TE plant is in Ido Grande in Pagbilao facing the Tayabas Bay.

Mr. Aquino said he could not allow LGUs to collect back taxes from independent power producers because it would "threaten the financial stability of the government and the stability of energy prices."

The President said the forcible collection of taxes by the local government could raise investment costs.

The governments of Quezon province and Pagbilao town, TE and national government officials went through several negotiations on how to settle the unpaid taxes.

The Supreme Court, in a ruling in January 2010, ruled in favor of the collection of the taxes by the Quezon and Pagbilao governments.

In December last year, the Quezon provincial government and Pagbilao issued a final notice of delinquency to TE in a bid to collect the taxes that have ballooned to P6.1 billion as a result of penalties and interests.

"ABS, Boca" sells for lively during the Gadog-Gading Festival.


THE FILIPINO YOUTH HAVE SPOKEN!
Change is about to happen.
Voice of the Youth

From more than 500 fourth year high school students from all over the country, 12 confident and brilliant young minds made it to the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza in Makati City where they vied to be the first ever National Champion of the Voice of the Youth – National Oratorical Competition on February 28, 2011.

English proficiency and critical thinking skills are vital as these will give one an edge in this globally-competitive arena. To hone the Filipino youth's English-speaking tongue and sharpen their minds, the Department of Education (DepEd), National Youth Commission (NYC), and STI Foundation together with the STI network of schools launched the Voice of the Youth – National Oratorical Competition (VOTY-NOC) last November 11 to serve as a venue for high school students to be involved and express their thoughts.

The 12 finalists delivered their prepared speeches themed **Change I Want to See Begins with Me: Becoming the New Filipino** to a distinct panel of judges composed of Mr. Mike Enriquez, VP for BGMA, Dr. Celia Dalisa, Professor from the UP College of Arts and Letters, and Mr. Walter Wong, VP for Training and Variety of the Antam Global Facility.

More than 1.6 million worth of prizes were given away. Mindanao's Champ Joshua D. Ferrer, the National Champion, won Php 100,000 in cash and got Php 400,000 worth of computer laboratory package for his school, Southwest School Davao. Charles Andre T. Cadiogan, First Runner-up and Luzon's pride, went home with cash worth Php 50,000 and his school, Baguio City National High School, received Php 400,000 worth of speech laboratory package.

Second Runner-up Patricia Mae M. Mijares got Php 25,000 for herself and a Php 300,000 e-Library package for her school, Bacolod City National High School. Coaches of the winning students all received school-related prizes worth Php 50,000 (Pauline Anne B. Ferrera, Champion), Php 15,000 (Wendelina B. Alejala, First Runner-up), and Php 10,000 (Adoracion C. Diamonon, Second Runner-up).

This is just the beginning. Next year's competition will definitely be bigger as more and more Filipino youth will be given a chance to speak their minds!

## Congratulations to the voices of the new Filipino!

# Ilocos mardi gras also way to revive dying fabric trade

By Cristina Arcadio
Inquirer Northern Luzon

PAOAY, Ilocos Norte—The annual mardi gras that signals the end of monthly pleasures for Catholics in this town is also an occasion to breathe life to a dying industry.

From home accents to dresses of fashion designers, the "Guling-Guling" Festival held on Tuesday was a time for residents to showcase woven fabric and revive the town's traditional loom-weaving industry.

Guling-guling dates back to the Spanish period when friars converted it as occasion for priests to entertain with their parishioners.

It is celebrated on the eve of Ash Wednesday because it was believed that it was the last day for merrymaking before townsfolk observe Lent.

"Guling" was derived from an Ilocano word that means to sunk, roam or make a sign.

In the past, the children (now mayor) would imprint the signed for roam on a person's forehead using soot, while rice flour to signify penny.

To boost resources, the festival is a chance to restore Ilocanos' interest in the ailing but otherwise profitable "abel Iloco" (Ilocano woven fabric) industry.

Charito Garliga, who heads a cooperative-owned loom weavers, says the festival could revive the industry and support customers into the customer to embrace traditional skills passed on by their elders.

"We need to generate sustained interest in our products before this ancient industry becomes merely a thing of the past," she says.

Town records show a dwindling number of loom weavers from 300-2000 to more than 500, who are mostly elderly.

In late 1990, former Ilocos Norte governor and now senator Ferdinand Marcos Jr. saw the industry as wearing extinction and created a training center to promote the craft among the youth.

The training center was closed down in early 2000 but residents who underwent workshops and skills training have formed cooperatives to sustain the industry.

The cooperatives' products were showcased in a trade exhibit as part of the festival events.

# 'Loterya', one-strike policy of PNP doubted

By Dollie T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—The government's new lottery rules under Fix Jesus following reports that franchises to operate "Loterayang Bayan" are being contested by financiers of the illegal numbers racket "jueteng."

Amid on-going operations in Pangasinan southern the rackets was still alive despite the Philippine National Police's one-strike policy that supposedly removes police officers if jueteng was since confirmed to be running in their jurisdiction.

Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez said the new Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office's lottery simply adds to the cultures of gambling already prevalent in the country.

Suarez's bets is being raised on whether the one-strike policy was effective, especially to Pangasinan where at least 17 persons were apprehended in anti-jueteng operations by the National Bureau of Investigation.

A source said the operations confirmed jueteng still exists in Pangasinan and the one-strike policy wasn't working.

Suarez, House deputy minority leader, said existing numbers games being run by PCSO "are enough."

Loterya will introduce three new games. "EZ2," where a bettor must pick two numbers from 1 to 31 with the winning combination being in exact order; "Swertres," where one picks three numbers from 0 to 9; and "Pares," where a bettor selects two numbers from 1 to 58.

Suarez said the country has become a nation of gamblers.

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

# Women chanters losing collective voice

By Frank Cimmon
Tabuk, Kalinga

NATY SUGGUIYAO is a Kalinga woman who literally wears her heart on her sleeves. Both of her arms are heavily tattooed with the ethnic designs that link her to her birthplace in Tanudan.

Sugguiyao, who is also the provincial coordinator of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, has another way of "coming home." "I chant the *ullalim*. It's my way of fellowship with my grandmother," she says.

The *ullalim* or "Ullalim Banao" is the epic of the Kalinga people through the love story of the warrior Banao and his sweetheart, Luggiyatan.

"My grandmother would chant it to us one episode at the time during the night. It would take four days and then it would be repeated," Sugguiyao recalls.

At its most traditional chants, it was not really the story but the sing-song photosynthesis that the ullalim was chanted that enchanted her and in due time, she, too, was able to chant the epic.

"Not everyone can do it. There has to be a part in you," she says.

During a recent Ullalim festival, the top chanters in Kalinga tried to out-chant each other at the provincial auditorium, but they had to battle as well the din of the birds that outside rode to loud pop music. The ullalim is usually sung in small gatherings, like the healing (peace pact) rituals, and would not adapt much to microphones.

Something was lost in translation. Sugguiyao says the people adopted the Ullalim festival as a source of pride for the province, but it has become, at least in the festivals, an all-encompassing term for the Kalinga way of life and the chanting was no longer the highlight.

Over at the remote Asta village of Salvakkad in the mountains of Pinukpuk, Kalinga province, is Teresa Tummao, who is in her 70s and one of the last few drawn-in chanters of the Asta people of Mount Pinuk'abo.

The chanters in an Asta Apnag, which not only heals the bodies and souls of the dead but their whole cosmology as well. Tumtay gay tma is trance as she chanted the ullalim while singing a hymn to Apo Namulyan, their supreme god. The benevolent spirits take over her as they battle to wrest the malevolent spirits within the afflicted.

She is dressed in a red traditional dress and is often accompanied by a khaw (metro gong).

A chanters performance is spiritually and physically draining, and Tumtay would usually be paid in chickens or cash. But she does hardly visit the village and Tumtay is usually not only the last but the first resort for healing.

"Many of them do not have money and I always advise them to go down the mountains and seek treatment from a doctor," Tumtay says.

The powers for healing through chants is manifested through another elaborate ritual, but Tumtay has no successor. "There is no one worthy and no one is interested," she says.

ANGUISH Teresa Tumtao-Asan of Kalinga chants the "ullalim."

# From Ninoy to Noynoy: The promise that is Balog Balog

By Jo Maritess Clemente
San Jose, Tarlac

A MEGA DAM in western Tarlac that can generate power and irrigate farmlands was one of the projects that martyred former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. had dreamed for his province. This was, in fact, included in his campaign materials when he ran for governor in 1965.

Forty-six years later, the project is being inundated in the hope that before the term of President Aquino ends, he would finally see the full business of his father's vision for his province mates.

The Balog Balog Multipurpose Project (BBMP) has been in and out of the government's drawing board, depending on the prevailing political climate. Located in Batocaler Mountain, 40 kilometers west of Tarlac City, it was once part of the provincial capital but is now part of San Jose town.

It had been on the priority list of projects for World Bank (WB) funding during the term of President Ferdinand Marcos. Some said it was disappointed by the WB because it was too wide open, while others said the late dictator held it back because the project is in Tarlac, the hometown of the elder Aquino, his political rival.

When Aquino widow, Corazon, assumed the presidency in 1986, the project resurfaced. Instead of the bigger original project of her administration, the 3MW were reduced to irrigate about 50,000 hectares of farmlands and put in place a 33-megawatt (MW) hydropower plant.

Its cost was then pegged at P3.7 billion, to be financed by a soft loan from the Italian government, with the Philippine government pouring in 30 percent equity. Annual loan interest was 1.5 percent, with a grace period of 10 years.

The project would have taken six years to complete.

But with President Corazon Aquino inheriting a deficit, the government had a hard time carving up equity. When Mount Pinatubo erupted in 1991, the project was set aside.

In 2008, it was resurrected. Then President Joseph Estrada, accompanied by Aquino's sister, former Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta, inspected the area.

Under Estrada, the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) approved the implementation of the BBMP. It was proposed for funding to the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) at P3.269 billion.

Vinnie Noticiada, BBMP manager, said the project was suspended as the JBIC then had an ongoing project in Central Luzon. Under its policies, it could only finance one project per region at a time.

Under the administration of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the BBMP was mothballed anew. The most attention it got was to be included among the build-operate-transfer (BOT) projects proposed by the government through the Department of Trade and Industry, as an estimated cost of P10.8 billion.

Today under the Aquino administration, the project had been resuscitated and is now with Neda for reevaluation. It is expected to get the Neda board's approval and be one of the priority projects for 2012.

INQUIRER

# OPINION

## The enemy within

**EDITORIAL**

NEW ARMED Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr. has responded vigorously to the marching order given to him by President Aquino "to continue the reforms" of his predecessor, Gen. Ricardo David, a very tactful reference to the corruption scandal facing the AFP as a result of the multi-million military comptroller ship scandal. Initially saying that the President's instruction was "very challenging," Oban has since vowed to stamp out corruption in the AFP by making fiscal and procurement reforms the cornerstone of his term. "I pledge to strengthen the procurement process and ensure accountability of every resource manager of the AFP," Oban vowed during the turnover ceremonies Monday. Referring to the alleged misuse of funds for bilateral military exercises and for various missions undertaken by the AFP for United Nations international peacekeeping, he added, "I pledge to safeguard funds from all sources, including that of Balikatan and the United Nations, and especially those coming from our teams, the blood and sweat of our people, and I shall hold myself accountable for their proper and effective utilization." Oban also promised to go after graft in the military, saying, "I pledge . . . the . . . prosecution of those who are not willing to work on these same pledges."

Tough words, one might say, but what is new and refreshing is that Oban has acknowledged the big problem facing the military: the problem of credibility. Unlike former chiefs of staff who, when confronted with allegations of military roguery or corruption, would look the other way or worse, fight off the accusations by denouncing the detractors and critics as enemies of the state, Oban's words indicate that the top brass now realize that the real enemy is within.

What may go against Oban is time. He only has until December to formulate and carry out his reforms. Because of the compulsory retirement law, he must step down before the year is over. Another leading contender to the AFP post, Philippine Army chief Lt. Gen. Arturo Ortiz, had reportedly begged off precisely because he would be retiring by November.

But though pressed for time, Oban may yet deliver. He is expected to deliver at the very least the initial stages of reforms that would be for the following chief of staff to consolidate and sustain. In a style he should take a leaf from the example of his predecessor, General David, who helped oversee the constitutional turnover of power last year and who cooperated with congressional inquiries into the military fund scandal, David had said he would get no going-away present when he retired, in reference to the large amounts of money allegedly given to retiring chiefs of staff in the previous administration.

Oban can sustain that reform, fine-tuning it, making it more effective and lasting. To all indications, he is the right man for the job. Trained in engineering at the University of Santo Tomas, he knows the value of laying the proper foundation. Having also gone to management school, he knows how to evaluate the available resources at his command and how to employ them effectively, minimizing possible risks and losses. A systems expert, he can identify the bottlenecks in the organization as well as those spots where graft would be most easy to commit.

In fact, he has come up with very concrete proposals to reform the system. He has pledged to computerize procurement to document all transactions, set up institutional checks and balances, and undertake unannounced random audits. And as further evidence that he has done his homework, he has vowed to implement the recommendations of the Feliciano Commission that investigated the 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

But perhaps the best thing going for Oban is the fact he's well-respected by both rank and file and the officers' corps. Despite being a systems person, he's no glorified clerk. As a combat pilot, he has exposure in the field; he knows operations. In fact, it is said that President Aquino took note of his accomplishment in leading the fight against the insurgency when he was head of Basa Air Base in Pampanga. His experience on the ground does not only bolster his credibility among men, it also means that he knows that the solution to the conflict is not purely military. This should enable him to steadily tackle the other underlying sources of the President: "to strengthen the peace programs of the AFP."

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## Whatever happened to our biofuel program?

**AS I SEE IT**

*Neal H. Cruz*

SENATORS CHIZ Escudero and Ferdinand Marcos Jr., two most likely presidential candidates in the 2016 elections, were among the three guests at the kapihan sa Manila at the Bulwagang Balagtasan last Monday (they were first interviewed separately, but eventually the two were together).

Both Escudero and Marcos would surely be joined against Gov Penafiel Joju Binay, who already has one foot in Malacañang, which would be a formidable ticket. Escudero's father Salvador Binay for vice president in the last election and was largely instrumental in Binay's victory by only 600 votes or 0.16 percent of the votes cast. Binay's victory is the first vice presidential win of Binay and vice versa?

But maybe it is still too early to think about that. Many things can still happen between now and 2016.

Whatever happened to the country's much-hallucinated biofuel projects? The money was supposed to process coconut and sugarcane oil, ethanol from sugarcane, cassava and kabo-kabo to become alternatives or supplement fossil fuel which is not only choke but subject to the problems and whims of the oil-producing countries. Coconut and sugarcane are the Philippines' most common crops. Cassava and kabo-kabo grow wild. All you have to do is plant more sugarcane, sugarcane, cassava and kabo-kabo. Brainstormers even palmed the image of Opec members someday imploring Biofuel Power to reduce their oil. Tables run dry—unless they sundry money, or the rate the world is quaking on. It turned out, however, that these bright images were only pious remains. Nothing was really done to produce biofuels except talk and talk.

**Pop: Travelers and Gasmen told the Kapihan** that between growing crops for food or fuel, it was decided that food should have priority. So large amounts of sugarcane, cassava and coconut oil could also remain (coconut should not be processed into fuel, they said. They should be conserved for food. And land should be reserved for the growing of food crops.

But what about the kabo-kabo? It is not a food crop, and it is supposed to be grown in poor soil not suited for food crops. Thus, the driver's not much of them yet. Pity said. Is the biofuel propaganda is just another of those campaign gimmicks?

**Which means we have to conserve our fossil.** Whatever the brave words and wishful thinking of the Department of Energy about having enough fuel reserves, that is not true. That is a story for. The fuel crunch will surely hit us. The bubble fuel economy will get worse before it gets any better.

So what do we do? Families should limit trips to car and use public transportation as much as possible. We should encourage car pooling. We should also make sure our vehicles are in top condition so they don't use too much fuel and emit fumes causing unnecessary stress over consumption plenty of gas.

The government should close the streets of traffic jams and other obstructions, so that vehicles can move faster. For one, the Department of Transportation and Communications and former Manila Development Authority should limit the number of buses on Edsa. All those half-empty buses plying Edsa are wasting plenty of fuel. Buses and jeepneys should be kept at terminals and dispatched only as needed. That will ease traffic and save fuel.

Let's also have more frequent trips of the light rail vessels to accommodate more passengers. Commuters will not have to wait for vessels at home. The light rails use electricity, not gas. Even for the commuter trains of the Philippine National Railways which, however, are diesel fuel.

Let us save on electricity by limiting the use of airconditioners and heaters. Many power plants use diesel fuel.

How for some good news. Marcos revealed that the wind fuel in Ilocos Norte is being expanded to produce more electricity. The private wind farm produces enough electricity to power the whole province at night. With the additional windmills (coming P1 million each) the wind farm would be able to export electricity to neighboring provinces.

Marcos said other energy windmills should be erected near Congress because there's plenty of hot air there. Very true. Hot air has replaced much fresh water there.

What about the wind turbine that President Aquino inaugurated in Pililla, Rizal? Is it operational, kitapusin and water supply? Has most of them are inservice of commission?

That's life in the Philippines.

## Still, corruption

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

PHOTO HAS a timely message for the graduating class of the Philippine Military Academy. "Sus took on this matter," he said, "not to enrich themselves. I have all of you today because you chose to serve this nation. . . That is why I want that values system to be the foundation of each of you, because you all have the courage to turn it down because the values instilled in you by PMA would prevail."

He exhorted the graduates not to follow the example of those who did not conduct themselves the generals and their wives who could not remember the total laughing amount they had managed to claim as their own. Its challenged them to follow instead in the footsteps of Gregorio del Pilar who, according to Aquino, never took his love of country and his duty as a soldier of the Katipunan, the original republic.

At the very least what makes P-Noy's message timely is that the PMA is really in need of it. Rumor and story are the things the military establishment thrives on. Only they are the last things to be found in it today. Or not the moment Senate investigations on the overuse of the general's entitlement to go by "Soldier's honor" and "soldier's duty" have become like "military time." Ignored. . . A contradiction in terms. Or perhaps more accurately "general's honor" or "general's duty": to the military, as you can upward in rank, you fall downward in morals.

In the very most what makes P-Noy's message timely is that he is the one saying it. None of his predecessors could have said it, except his mother. Having people in black away truckloads of money dumped on their feet is certainly something his immediate predecessor could not have said, or since she wasn't beyond pushing anything, including her luck, could not have said without provoking much laughter from the public.

P-Noy can. He has been criticized for many things, but none of them includes being a crook. He has at least the moral weight to carry out his **crusade** against the culture of corruption. That weight, nothing more.

But I don't know that corruption always takes the form of a domestic choice between a much-used or unused smelly pesky. That's enough I don't know that the choice always really presents itself in black and white: to be corrupt or to be honest, to be crooked or to be straight, to steal or not to steal. The problem is far more complicated than that. The problem is that the culture of corruption, of corruption in the country, is full of gray areas. That doesn't just make it hard to order, that makes it hard to define.

What do we really mean when we say that a public official is not corrupt? Do we mean someone who does not personally benefit directly or on his salary and allowances in life? Do we mean someone, elected or appointed, who has no business interest, or who truly divests himself of his business interest if he has one, and places it in a blind trust under the control of others? If that's how we define a public official who is not corrupt, finding one in the three branches of government and the military may be harder than finding 10 just men in Sodom and Gomorrah.

The fact that candidates spend a fortune to get elected is already a dead giveaway. We assume not just that he will try to recoup his expenses once he gets elected but that he is entitled to it, provided he reaps no investments in the process. That is the corruption culture in our government, indeed the bar that everyone in the presidential race must exclusively overcome, making it a point not to be out of sight of the President for very long (the current government to be exempted is yet another dead giveaway). Given this public-service mind set a person engaged in private-sector ones is, to find gone that public-sector ones are destination or poverty, as P-Noy himself says, why are people driven like mules to a flame to join government, even bringing one daggers with which to cudgel rivals to the back? Either we have an excess of self-sacrificing martyrs determined to spend the remainder of their years, or we have a bunch of people hungry for loot.

Scholars tell us that the problem of corruption dates back to Spanish times, the governor-generals being supported in plunder as long as they did not consider rebellion. That practice was tacitly held by the auditors who audited the governor-generals before they left. They expected them to plunder enough so they comfortably refund their own back to Spain after distributing to the auditors their usual bribes. But one governor-general was so debilitating government's coffers to allow a revolt to succeed.

I suppose that persons has provided other time and accepted into the culture. The problem with it of course is that "just two grams" is not the same as "just two grams." It is open to marked formal. Or the fundamental can always raise the bar to exceptionally high levels provided he has the armed might to do it. Marcos did, OMB did. Fighting corruption in this sense has only been a matter of lowering the bar or "moderating the ground," as Romulo Neri so felicitously put it.

Frankly, I don't know that we really have a concept of the corrupt, in the sense of someone who appropriates taxpayers' money for his own purposes. I suspect that what we do have is a concept of arrogance, one who has risen in life by according to our community changing definitions of gross. We pretty much go by instinct on that one. Marcos and GMA were corrupt. Noy was corrupt, but was simple in time. The people involved in the NBN-ZTE were corrupt. Lapu and Garcia and their backers are corrupt. There are corrupt. As to the executive, congressmen and congressmen, justices and generals, one of whom has set in order point if we go by their meager government pay, the only question is who is the one Angelo Reyes-admit with gentlemen's agreement.

"Was I greedy?"

# Myths of Facebook, Twitter 'revolutions'

FACEBOOK, THE social media network, is destined to have more than 500 million subscribers worldwide. I am not one of that vast army of camp followers.

In the history of campaigns, camp followers consisted of the retinue of the invading military superpowers, including soldiers, cooks, rear lasses to fit-tempered generals, equine looking after the horses, and of course, women who provided all sorts of services to the troops.

I consider Facebook a huge pool of information, into which a person contributes his/her privacy as a consenting adult in microscopic examination by marauders, or blackmail operators. Despite assurances of security of information and protection of privacy of the clients, there is nothing sure about the storage of information except its confidence in the most to secrecy "stuff" not being hacked by private, city-limited crooks or spies.

Initially dubbed as a social network in which people connected (they also call it "friending") their acquaintances with the "click" of a mouse, it has evolved into by getting in touch with one another in a supposedly harmless and relaxed "newsworthy" way it has expanded in scope. I wonder if most people know whether they are getting a fair deal in dealing—that is the faceless provider-the social media for newsworthy information, which is now considered as the invasion of their privacy through their phone, telephone numbers, addresses, bank account numbers, their friends or friends of their friends, the books they read, their favorite movies, their favorite food, their favorite drinks, their favorite places to go to eat, their favorite music, their birthdays, their anniversaries, religious, school, social club memberships, their credit card numbers, and stock exchange history. This information pool is a treasure for criminal elements, military and police intelligence agencies, and authorities and manufacturers who want to market to agents. It is a mine field of information for espionage by agents of aspiring dictators.

Most of the information collected by government today consists of the private, classified or

**ANALYSIS**

*Amando Doronila*

interest liabilities (IOU, for collateral, USE clauses), and consumer credit. Some of these terms are more than this. They have spread their dragnet to travel personal information like what purpose, it's hard to say—to profit people's need to validate their private relationships regarding matters that have little to do with the privacy of public interest.

Of late, social media have developed into instruments of transmission of political intelligence for the overthrow of dictatorships in the Middle East—a task and function not originally envisaged by their founders—with media boycotted or stifled especially in countries that have media monopolies under repressive regimes that use media laws to serve their own ends, and now they have an identity problem and their role as a catalyst of political and social changes is seriously being examined.

The manner to which social media contributed to the toppling of the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt is a matter of debate, according to Agence France Presse. Their role in what is now called The Age of Digital Revolution has become contentious. There is danger that the role would be overmagnified at the expense of underrating the importance of other elements, including the factor of years-long social public resistance to brutal human rights oppression.

AFP reported that in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain and Libya, graphic pictures and raw video of harsh crackdowns by the security forces on crowds of protesters have incited international condemnation of these governments and further fueled popular anger in the streets. Such footage has been uploaded to Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube and other sites.

"The biggest factor in the unfolding events, to use, appears to be the strongest power of young people, compounded by how unhindered they are," said British Telly, co-founder of politics and technology site Mediaculture. "Could it be that what we're witnessing is the political coming of age of Generation Tech?"

Wael Ghonim, the Google executive cyber activist who emerged as a leader of the anti-government protests in Egypt, said social media "played a crucial role" in the events that led to Hosni Mubarak's ouster. He said Facebook, activated Twitter, without Google, without YouTube, this would have never happened," Ghonim said. "If there were no social networks it would have never been sparked."

Ghonim, who started the Facebook page "We Are All Khaled Said," is credited with helping mobilize the demonstrators in Cairo's Tahrir Square. Khaled Said was the young Egyptian who was beaten to his death by the police—a brutality believed to have triggered the protest movement in January.

Alec Ross, senior adviser for innovation to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, also got in the act as Ghonim is giving credit to social media. Ross said social media played an "important role" in the events in Egypt and Tunisia but emphasized that "technology did not create the disaffection movements." He said "it did not cause dictatorships to become unstable—people did to push well past. They were not Facebook revolutions or Twitter revolutions. Technology served as an accelerant. A movement that historically would have taken months or years has compressed into the shortest time cycles."

Truly revolutions do not happen without angry people in the streets. Technology is merely the mechanism through which people express their wrath. It does not become from the banks of Facebook and Twitter.

In the meantime, Facebook has to make up its mind whether it is a political power broker or just a facilitator of social intercourse. It is beginning to muddle its functionalities.

# Women proving themselves

IN OBSERVANCE of International Women's Day yesterday, the Bulong-Pilipinas media forum invited women leaders from all walks of life to gather here to share the "Women's Agenda in the Senate."

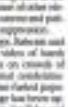
Led by Rep. Elisa de Venecia, president of the Federation of Lady Legislators, the group was a mixed gathering of women legislators, senators, party-list and district representatives, members of the executive and supporting staffs, mothers and grandmothers carrying them the youthful looking way. Like their colleagues—all of them pretty, pro-opinionated and determined to make a difference in the field of politics.

Asked if they felt women had "issues them-selves" to deal with in the Senate, Sen. Loren Legarda, Dr. Veronica cited the accomplishments of the women in the past Congress, which passed three landmark bills on women's concerns: the Magna Carta of Women, the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act, and the Expanded Maternity Leave Law. Right now, she said, the association's priority is the passage of the anti-Corporal Punishment Bill, which would lay down penalties—including criminal punishment (incidentally, applicable to their parents).

Rep. Jude Acosta, a returning congresswoman after choosing to go on leave in the mid of her third term, acknowledged that "the men have been very supportive." She said she took a leave of absence during her time as chair of the committee on women when the Anti-Trafficking and Anti-VAWC bills started down the road to passage.

Rep. Kaka Bag-ao, a party-list lawmaker, clarified that women legislators don't necessarily have to be confined to "pro-women bills," saying women also have a say on matters that affected the general welfare of families, for instance, that the Reproductive Health Act of the 15th Congress, she said, "has come from consulting with Magsaysay where both of them had discussions on the need to regulate water rates, tends to the contentions of the major water companies." Women are harder to corrupt," said Bag-ao. However, by mostly because lobbyists have fewer opportunities to compromise them. ("Walang masyadong tuksuhan," commented Magsaysay.)

* * *



**AT LARGE**

*Brian Fonseca-David*

FEDS DOTE as part of the coverage of International Women's Day, Agence France-Presse had an item entitled "Feminism emerges as driving force in African revolts."

The report, authored by Rosalia Sarfaty, mentioned how, in the popular revolts now throwing the Arab world into turmoil, "women are defying both culture and stereotype and emerging as a driving force that is keeping the momentum of the protests alive."

Shahla Sherif, senior researcher at Human Rights Watch, was quoted as saying that a key factor in causing the gender of women in these movements was the "very diverse, physically present in the streets, showing their numbers."

This is beauty wrote, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa where women by law and tradition have long been kept subservient and sheltered by conservative Islamic mores. Would the revolts herald a new age of emancipation for women in the Arab world, and for all women living under Muslim law?

* * *

**WELL, let's look at the example of Egypt.** It is one of the earliest examples of a three-three **popular revolt, with former President Hosni Mubarak ousted, with a military-run coalition working together in a new government under a new constitution now being crafted by a Constitutional Committee.**

And yet a broad coalition of civil society groups have issued a statement expressing their "disapproval of the criteria and formation of the Constitutional Committee (which) does not include a single female expert." The issue, said the signatories, "poses a critical question as regards the future of women's rights in Egypt, especially after the (already) unfulfilled promises of equality, freedom, democracy and participation of all citizens."

Amid the protest: "We believe that as Egyptian women have played a significant role in the revolution with Egyptian men and some of them have been jailed and suffered brutal attacks have even been tortured murdered, they have the right to participate in building the New Egypt. This is not only the basis of civil society."

Sarcastic and prominent women have been brought to bear on Egyptian authorities regarding the absence of women from the constitution-drafting body. But Egypt is not the first country or revolution where women fought alongside men only to find their gains and contributions ignored and men conspiring to put them back "where they belong."

# Beauty and butterflies

HEALTH PHOBICS dominate designers, so forcing the growing concern for looking and feeling good. Once almost exclusively for women and girls, more so now is male enhancement products and services who buy the same products under different packaging and formulation.

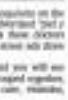
Watching my mother go through her evening ritual as a boy, I noticed what it was to wash, soak, moisturize. I took it for granted that it was as much a daily habit like brushing my teeth. Teenage pimples forced me to use watery instead of buttermilk. I found nature abroad forced me to use moisturizer, or what's the point of having a car in the garage?

How any products moved from women to men is a matter of academic study. Skin care for men is not necessarily for gays as marketers coined the term "heterosexual" for them, for even the hardcore male chauvinist pigs are now known as prefer to socialize.

I began to care for my skin after seeing my mother's high school classmates. They all looked old even if they were younger. Younger looking than members whom were declared. "Wrinkle-aging purge to labor-ageless, labor-aging-remediation-aging-purging-openness." Years of dedicated daily skin care paid off. Now approaching 50, I forgive the pun) looks up for my time.

It is not enough to be born beautiful. One has to maintain it. Because beauty is one of the first gifts God gives us birth and it is also one of the first he takes away.

The change in Filipino attitudes to beauty and skin care can be seen in the medical profession. Long before "Abé Bobo challenged the prohibition on doctors advertising their profession, long before our sacred offices are marketing and offering "no consultation" doctors had traditional areas of specialties, one, for example, ENT (Ear, Nar, Throat and Throat), but now some doctors just do ears, or noses. Before cosmetic surgery was considered a luxury, their area of specialization used to be ears and internal diseases. I realized this from an old



**LOOKING BACK**

*Anabelle R. Ocampo*

clinic I passed in a newly blasted magazine on the way to the Philippine Heart Center, where I had a worrisome. In those days, before cosmetic surgery was not in the most fancy. It is also necessary to have good ears. And since ganglia the butterflies are not held down with pins but placed in paper bags, I take the library right now to send you in a little bit less.

"Two nuns and some paper bags of various sizes, by way of sample. Hold both secured lines. Bless, though damaged ones. The paper bags are for the purpose of showing how the butterflies are inserted in them." By way of a little experiment, you can return to me this little box filled with any kind of butterflies to paper bags, caught with one of the nets."

While Hand sent the box and used the money to buy his wonder cream outside Baguio, he explained other matters of necessity. Since the Philippine Normal University specializes in Creative, he got room to exchange. So he sent butterflies in field and got that acknowledgement, dated July 3, 1995.

"Since I found the (unofficial) white butterflies," Hand wrote, "I have a very good specimens among them, as they were from Baguio, but also, also, also, they were more or less flayed, and it was evident that the carrier who gathered them did not know how to put them in the envelopes. Some of the scales may be carries them with the fin? Of those 10 specimens, seven are too worn even the paper of the cases—they are so flayed that I return them with their names and classification to (and) Philippines. Please send me more specimens."

After the letter, Hand stopped sending butterflies. It was too much trouble, especially Hand's letter to me Boston faced with scandals and elaborated his own name and individual project.

"Now I made to the end of my hand exercise a filled with cyanide or cotton soaked in chloroform. As it is only with chloroform that butterflies are narcotized and stunned, it is necessary to kill them otherwise by piercing their thoracic with a pin moistened with chloride, ethanol pure."

Butterflies narcotized and displayed under glass is a museum can be very beautiful indeed, but as to personal life it takes great care to look and feel beautiful.

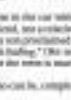
Comments are welcome to my Facebook Also Page

# Kids and gender

SOME TIME last month I was in the car with my 5-year-old son, with his Yaya Mary in front, me in the back with my beloved. Suddenly out of the blue, my son approached me in a tone of pre-pubescent solidarity: "You think is boring." (No note: I'm going to translate "boring" as gay but the term is much more complicated than that.)

Myth is to me like as much as he, compliant with tattoos, for ground, like "Ow ... more" do, "It's a magic."

I knew it was serious when my son, usually so quick to spark some conversation, on 1 note up—as it, adding him why he thought "I'm think was boring."



**PINOY KASI**

*Michael L. Tee*

My son insisted on his thinks to me, and explained, "My idea (He has earrings)." I was fascinated, seeing for myself what Jose Rizal had written decades ago about the development of children's cognitive capabilities.

My son was clearly going through what Piaget called a pre-operational stage, where children classify objects (and people) according to one characteristic. In my son's example, it is cute because it has long and visible whiskers. If you ask the whiskers-to-child might say they are to no longer a cat like a dog.

This kind of pre-operational thinking extends into gender. Little boys will pretend if you ask them to wear a dress because they are convinced that will make them girls. My son had vowed to an earring as a "woman thing." (So, eventually, had also figured that if a man were a woman thing then makes him boring. I know he wasn't being anti-gay in the way he used the term. For him, feeling was a stylish desire between opposite sexes.

I asked him, "When does Tito Heidi is so boring?" Heidi is another family friend who is so boring in feeling can be in the order of being effeminate and yet does not wear earrings. My son paused, then arranged his shoulders, "He's Tito Heidi."

I thought I'd shift the frame. "And what about men who have more rings? Are they boring?"

My son found that hilarious, practically rolling on the floor as he threw the question back at me: "Mom rings!"

I definitely realized I'm probably bad for my son's opinion with a mom ring, even my grandson, he just had to answer, "That's silly. If Tito Mark wanted into wore grammar, like his concepts of gender, is everything a man ring, he would be a hero." There was a split second pause, and then the final judgment: "It looking home."

**Homosexuality gender**

Gender is a tricky field. There days religious cannot teaches in the United States and their followers in the Philippines insist that gender is a "code word" invented by some international conspiracy to justify acceptance of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, and transgenderism. At the same time, the boundaries of masculinity and femininity are being challenged, which they blame on modern ideas, on Western fashion, on secularism.

But male-ness and female-ness have always been fluid concepts. Even in pre-colonial Philippine society, there were transvestites—men who dressed as women (or vice versa for women) known as babaylan, asog and various other names. Such transgenders were perceived as powerful because of their androgyny, so much so that they would officiate at religious ceremonies.

Each of these transgenders were found in many societies and in some cases, I think our subconscious memory of the feminine makes Filipinos quite accepting of a feeling prince (albeit without earrings).

Growing, modern society is much more complex, with more cross-overs in terms of gender roles, but this can be a good thing. In the early 20th century, there were still limits in the US that banned women from wearing pants. That was an improvement over the medieval ages, when someone like Joan of Arc was burned at stake, again for daring to take up male roles, especially as a soldier. Today, transwomen or transmen can be open about their gender identities, and many families, which they label as a transposition of normal lives.

That a trip gender issues need to be tackled even with very young children. I want my children to grow up understanding that boys can do girl things, and vice versa, but the bottom line that equality starts at home. My parents-both my non-where he wears nail polish and my son who likes to wear his father's ties-order him to wear a red shirt for a birthday party, and he made a passionate case for the Chinese.

The battles spill over into school. I was alarmed when my son came home one day with homework showing pictures of a chef, driving a car, going to work, watching the parades and pictures of a nurse, doing the laundry, and caring for baby. I asked him if it was all right for his Dada to cook for him (which I do from time to time), and without batting an eyelash, he answered yes—and promptly announced he was hungry.

I thought up the names of the street and that lessons with the gentlest counselor (the school is Catholic) to one of our parish teachers' instructions and the counselor assured me the pictures are discussed and the kids are told that it's all right for dads to do "mom things" and vice-versa. She acknowledged that boys will be boys, but that they have many working moms there are cooks, as well as single-parent households.

**Sexuality education**

Let me stress these adventures in gender education in the 21st century. I know people will believe in family planning, even using contraceptives—but sexuality education? Forget it. It's left because it proscribes "sex education." Usually, they express the fear with stereotypes like "I just don't like the idea of teaching condoms in kindergarten."

What this frill bill proposes is "sexuality education," something different from sex education, to be taught in phases. Awareness of gender issues, which leads those as a respect for people, men or women, straight or gay, is a vital part of sexuality education and one which has to start early. Science has evidence based guidelines on sexual behavior and reproduction, and the science of sexuality is the most important of sexuality education is no happenstance. Gender sensitivity challenges stereotypes so girls learn to admit their rights and boys can be more respectful toward girls. And for both boys and girls, sexuality education allows them to go beyond traditional gender roles and tap into their full potentials.

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I'm comfortable that my kids can ask questions freely because they do so without shame. What I find disturbing is when a kid is ridiculed for calling someone feeling, and then he goes home and asks his parents why some parents or elders making fun of "boy-effeminate" behavior behind his back.

Our goal should not be superficial political correctness. My kids will never make fun of people who don't fit the traditional molds—nor because I'd smack them, but because they can, for themselves, cite whole episodes of The Ellen Show and The Office to show that they have learned to appreciate and treat toys and nature, loving and caring for them unconditionally.

Email: lttee@inquirer.com.ph

need a job?

# Pinocchio galore in the Senate investigations

LETTERS

IN PINOCCHIO, the Blue Fairy says, "Lies are easily recognized."

In Senate investigations, a servicable of Pinocchio galore is heard routinely. On live TV, banking officials and government functionaries are caught either cognitively patients or manifestly criminal, or both.

Through the hidden tracks in the human body, eyes, feet, nose, hands, shoulders, voice, gestures, mannerisms and general body language, you can spot dishonest answers. Behaviorists have found a number of non-verbal and cognitive signs associated with lies. Did you observe, for example, the witnesses who have been coached or educated through their mentors-in-counsels against self-incrimination? Don't they know they have already incriminated themselves by their unfaithfulness? Aren't George Rahmas, and his attorneys battered by relentless skirmishes but offering the world: Did you notice the tendency of the military officers and their civilian cohorts to mimic including the pauses in their answers, their eyeing their palms like at recollection, their lack of spontaneity and their emotional facial expressions? What about their implausible answers, cognitive impairments, indirect or roundabout answers, lack of detail and turning to think long and hard before replying to questions?

These witnesses flaunt their contempt for truth. With clandestine defiance they seem evidence of their wrongdoing, instead of admitting guilt.

What is evidence? It is the means, sanctioned by the Rules of Court, of ascertaining the truth. In Senate committee hearings, technical rules of evidence (applicable to judicial proceedings) which do not affect substantive rights need not be observed. What is the merit, for example, about the "plea bargaining," or the rejected military corruption? The rules of evidence say that moral certainty only is required, or such degree of proof which produces conviction in an unprejudiced mind. Do the testimonies of Air Lucinda, Rahmas or Heidi Mendoza measure up to that degree of proof requirement?

Aristotle described it is a syllogism, a process of reasoning in which a conclusion is drawn from two or more statements or premises that are assumed to be true. Example: All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal. Do the testimonies of Air Lucinda, Rahmas or Heidi Mendoza measure up to that degree of proof requirement?

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—LUCIANO S. SARIO,
former Senate secretary,
lucilsario@yahoo.com

# Edsa I's unsung heroes more heroic than defectors

IN COMMEMORATING and false I to the people power uprisings in the Middle East, Amando Doronila ("Solemn/happy families and people power events," Inquirer, 2/28/11) and Conrado de Quiros ("The patron and the glory" 2/28/11) attribute our success to the courage of the people on the streets, while former President Fidel V. Ramos architecture it to the able military. They are all only partly right. But they neglect, whether deliberately or unwittingly, to give credit to the loyalist soldiers, Marines, General Avelino Tafiar and Col. Rodito Valbuena who were also the kill zones.

Yes, Presidents Marcos did give the order to shoot even if he denied it on television in that exchange with Air Logistics Armed Forces chief of staff, Fabian Ver, which was partly a farcical. Tafiar on Dec 2 at Ortigas was ordered to drive through the crowd, never mind if civilians got hurt, but he did not. Valbuena on Dec 3 was ordered to bomb Camp Crame headquarters, never mind if it was full of civilians, and he did not. ("How would you...") by Associated Agencies in the 8th, 10, 2011 issue of the Inquirer.

There are the unsung heroes of Edsa I. They were definitely men's heroic, even if they did not deliver, that the soldiers who delivered and then hid behind the skirts of nuns and other civilians.

—ISIDRO PETER SANTIAGO,
isaacs@gmail.com

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# Arroyos want 'fair treatment' for Gutierrez

BOTH Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez likely to be impeached for, among other things, failing to act on graft cases involving the former First Family, the Arroyos at the House of Representatives yesterday said all they wanted was "fair treatment."

"What JMA (former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo), needs as does any Filipino citizen, is a fair court/tribunal, the rules of evidence are used in determining innocence or guilt," her allies said, ang Galing Pinoy Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, said in a text message to reporters.

The reaction followed by the leadership, Committee Vice Rep. Dimitris Ang-Angara, who said President Aquino's allies should give Gutierrez "due process given to her by the Constitution in spite of the President's order to speed up her impeachment."

Former President Joseph Estrada, who himself were through an impeachment trial that led to his ouster a decade ago, said Gutierrez was not unfairly deprived of due process at the administration-dominated House.

Contacted by phone for comment, Estrada said that consistent with the rules, Gutierrez's case was examined and deliberated on at the committee level and would be examined at the plenary level for approval.

### Erap: Merci's luckier

"In a way she's luckier than me," he told the reporters, recalling that he was never accorded with due process when he was impeached in 2000.

"So if she's really innocent, she can defend herself in the Senate impeachment court. If she's not guilty, she has nothing to fear," he said.

By Mendiola's reckoning, Gutierrez could learn from his mistakes enough and optimism of his own impeachment trial.

"I was ready to defend myself, but the prosecutors walked out when it was my turn to do so," he said. "From if the impeachment process was railroaded, I knew I could defend myself."

Estrada said the Senate would provide a better venue for Gutierrez to air her defense.

"The Senate is more mature in deciding on this. It is more objective. She will be given due process there," he said.

Estrada's son, Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Estrada, echoed his father's position, saying: "We will assure the Ombudsman that she will be given due process here in the Senate." *Reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Christian E. Esguerra*

# Unleaded gas shoots past ₱54 per liter

From page A1

the prices based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products.

MOPS-based gasoline prices rose to $120.74 a barrel last week from the previous week's level of $116.8 a barrel, diesel prices increased to $120.53 a barrel from a week ago level of $113.46, Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras said.

Based on the formula being followed by oil firms, a $1-per barrel increase is equivalent to a 95-per liter hike in the price of a petroleum product.

### Potential food crisis

Days after forming a committee to ensure the country's consumers fuel supply, Malacañang yesterday announced that President Aquino would meet next week with officials to tackle a potential food crisis.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda made the announcement after Sen. Benigno Aquino warned of a food crisis caused by the conflict in Libya and the unrest in the Middle East.

"For the moment, there is no crisis," Lacierda said at a news briefing.

"However, the President will be meeting with Department of Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala, National Food Authority Administrator Lito Banayo and Dialogue Secretary Florencio Abad next week after his arrival to discuss the food situation and rice supply," he added.

Lacierda said the three officials were requested to raise the concerns of some senators over local supply when they meet the President next week after his state visits to Indonesia and Singapore.

He said the National Food Authority had already briefed Mr. Aquino on the country's rice supply. The NFA on Monday said it would import 860,000 metric tons of rice for 2011.

### World food prices

Consumers around the world are facing not only rising fuel prices but also surging food costs.

Prices of major grains such as grains, rice, wheat and maize have been rising since last year, the FAO said.

The FAO Cereal Price Index averaged 234 points in February, up 10.7 percent from January and the highest since July 2008.

Of all the commodities monitored—dairy, oils and fats, meat, and sugar—only the sugar sector saw a slight decrease. The rest registered price increases.

The FAO recently said that the global cereal supply would tighten this year due to growing demand and poor harvests.

### Local prices

Despite warnings of food shortage and the series of fuel price increases, there has been no increase in the prices of soy, onions, rice, pork and poultry in the country, according to Agriculture Assistant Secretary Salvador Salonga.

"Agricultural commodities are very stable. We see movements on the positive side," Salonga said yesterday.

The prices of sugar and onions have even gone down, he said.

"The ongoing milling of sugar cane has led to the current supply increase in the previous months. The supply improvements accounted for the 57-per kilogram price cuts at wholesale for both refined and brown sugar," the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) said.

The agency based its observation on the prices of commodities for the week ending on March 4. It added that the price of onions had gone down due to a large supply.

The white onion price was cut by 3% per kilogram from the P50 prevailing price last week, while Red Creole was sold at P62 per kilogram, cheaper by P28 compared with last week's quotations, the BAS said.

### Low demand

Although certain factors can affect the prices of commodities, these have been offset by low demand, Salonga said. "Even if they increase, it won't be as much because demand is low," he said.

This was also the observation of the BAS. "Prices of basic food items such as rice, chicken, onion and tomato are relatively stable considering the sufficient supply coupled with slow market absorption," it said.

The product that could see a price increase is cooking oil, Salonga said. This was due to the projected volume of soya, which is down by 5 percent.

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# GenSan is on animal smuggling route

By Tara Quimando

PEREZ—The southern Philippines is one of the most notorious trade routes for wild animals from neighboring Indonesia and serves as a transshipment point to other countries, an animal rights activist and wildlife conservationist said yesterday.

Dr. Willie Smits, a world authority on orangutans and founder of conservation group Orangutan Outreach, said syndicates use the tuapse in Sarangani Bay City to smuggle in endangered animals from Birang to South Sulawesi, the Indonesian island closest to the Philippines.

"The Philippines is the worst," Smits told the business on the sidelines of the Microsoft-Regional Innovative Education Forum here.

"We've done undercover work with smugglers in the Philippines and over all the orangutans in the amusement centers, all of them smuggled," said Smits, who delivered the keynote address on deforestation and orangutan conservation to open the conference yesterday.

He said that rare animals—hornbills, orangutans, sun bears, gibbons, birds of paradise—are taken by boat from the port of Birang, through the Celebes Sea, and on to General Santos from where they are forwarded to other destinations.

**Animal destinations**

"From the Philippines, a lot of animals go on to Japan, to Taiwan, to America and other countries, but also quite a bit end up in amusement parks and private zoos in the Philippines, with (ruled) by individuals," said Smits.

His group is working with Philippine authorities and conservationist groups to shut down the Birang-Gen San wildlife trade. He withheld details of the operation as it is underway.

"My concern give out information because we hope to shut down those involved. We're gonna try to bring some orangutans from the Philippines back to Indonesia now," Smits said.

Smits said wildlife trafficking is a billion-dollar a year industry in Indonesia, with syndicates operating at least three routes: Birang to General Santos; North Sumatra to Guangzhou, China; and from Jakarta to other countries.

"From Indonesia, $1 billion worth of wildlife is smuggled every year. And we have huge losses there ... an even bigger loss to nature really," said Smits, an Indonesian citizen who was originally from the Netherlands.

There were some 50,000 orangutans in Borneo in 2002, the latest figures that I documented. I am here now to be taken from here and traded overseas, Smits said.

"So if you look for every baby that enters the trade, the mother was killed as well, and not all of them make it to the trade. Then you know it's very serious," he said.

**Borneo conservation**

A forester and ethnobiologist, Smits has been working for the conservation of Borneo's endemic orangutan species since the 1980s. His brainchild, the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation, is known as the world's largest orangutan conservation organization.

He has partnered with Microsoft for the InSPIRAsation project, which hopes to gather 10 million avatars (volunteers) from around the world to monitor illegal logging operations on 90 million hectares of forest cover in Borneo.

But for launch in May the project hopes to halt deforestation in Borneo within a year and prevents those involved in illegal logging.

## Corrections

IN THE LATER EDITION OF THE MAR. 2 ISSUE, a front-page photo caption misstated that Orthodoxian Metropolitan Gaudencio "requests fair treatment from the House justice committee." In fact, Gaudencio said that she "cannot expect any fair treatment from the justice committee at this point."

* * *

IN THE MAR. 4 ISSUE, a front-page article—"Muslim, Christian royalty 'kin on peace'"—misstated the name of one of the agencies that support PeaceTrails. The agency is GIZ—not GTZ—of Germany through its Civil Peace Service Program.

* * *

IN THE SARAKS EDITION OF THE MAR. 7 ISSUE, a front-page article—"Nine's feminist activism ends"—misstated the name of a New York-based global organization advocating universal access to reproductive health services and the reduction of maternal mortality. The organization is Women Deliver—not Mothers Deliver.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a story on Page A6—"What is source of Cimatu's fortune? Some want to know"—misstated the realty rank held by former MP Rosario del Pilar Ocampo Rabaca. She is the retired lieutenant colonel—not lieutenant general.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, the Biz Buzz column on Page B3 of the Business section—"Meralco, BIBF 1 haggling"—misstated that Manny Stuhl's Investments Corp. proxy rights to control the operator of Metro Rail Transit 3. The sole party is Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.—not Anglo Saxon.

* * *

IN THE MAR. 8 ISSUE, the front-page banner story—"Key to 10 impeach bet"—misstated that Senator Bryan was affiliated with the party-list group Bayan's Maisa. Bryan is the secretary general of the militant bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan).

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors in writing to the Philippine Daily Inquirer, 765 Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati-Sta. Mesa, Makati City. Fax Nos. 897-47-02 loc. 2 and 896-63-21. Email address: corrections@inquirer.com.ph.

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## The Daily Gospel

MARCH 9 (Wednesday)
Feria • Week 8
Ash Wednesday

Dt 9:3.7-8, 9-10a, 11-13, 14-and 17
Ps 106:6-7a.13-14.19-20, 21-22 (4a)
2nd Reading: 2Cr 5:20—6:1
Gospel: Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

...Between the vestibule and the altar, let the priests, Yahweh's ministers, weep and say: Spare your people, Yahweh. Do not hand us down as object of scorn among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples: Where is their God?

Yahweh has become jealous for his land; he has had pity on his people.

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be careful not to make a show of your righteousness before people. If you do, you cannot gain anything from your Father in heaven. When you give something to the poor, do not have it announced before you... "If you give something to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your gift remains truly secret. Your Father who sees what is hidden will reward you.

"When you pray, do not be like those who want to be seen. They love to stand and pray in the synagogues or on street corners to be seen by everyone. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is within secret room; and your Father who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

When you fast, do not put on a miserable face as do the hypocrites. They put on a gloomy face, so people can see they are fasting. I tell you this: they have been paid in full already. When you fast, wash your face and make yourself look cheerful, because you are not fasting for appearances or for people, but for your Father who sees beyond appearances. And your Father, who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

**Reflection**

We begin our liturgical year—the season of Lent. The readings tell us to be faithful and propose three attitudes or practices that will help us to our spiritual journey: fasting, prayer and compassion to each other. All of these must flow from the depth of our hearts because God sees what is secret and he will reward us accordingly.

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# Ash Wednesday: Without God, we are nothing

From page A1

is beautiful. With God, everything is possible. God has become like us so that we may become like Him.

Who are you? Who are we? Who are we in relation to the material things we have? Who are you in relation to your possessions? Who are you in relation to the earth? Who are you in relation to other people? Who are you in relation to the moon and seasons and years of your lives? Who are you in relation to your talents and your intelligence?

*Are you an owner?*

The owner says this house is mine. The owners says this land, the house, this car, this property is mine. The owners says I am free to use all my properties and possessions as I wish. The owner says I can enjoy what I have because I worked hard for them.

I have absolute rights over my body and over my properties. I can use my time however I wish. I can waste it. I can use it...any time I want.

I have people I pay for saving me, they are mine. I can dismiss them, I can use them provided I pay them justly according to our contract. I am the boss. I am the owners. I do not need to account to anyone. I am the master of my life and I am the captain of the ship of my life.

But you are not an owner! You are only a steward.

### Everything is grace

My time, my talents and my resources were entrusted by God to me temporarily. The assets said by Fellicot belong to the Lord, says Psalm 24:1.

If what I have is God's and not mine, therefore, I must use my material blessings according to the plan of God and not just according to my whims and pleasure and comfort.

The steward's rights are not absolute. The steward will one day return what has been entrusted to him by the lord Owner Christ that for you. By your baptism you have become a sculptures of the life and love of Christ Himself.

The source of our steward-ship is no logician. When we were baptized, God entrusted to us the honor of being His children. "You belong no longer to yourselves. Remember at what price you have been bought and make your body serve the glory of God." (1 Cor 6:19).

Everything is grace. You have done nothing to merit being a child of God. None of us is self-made. When God created us, he looked at us and found us very good.

### Life, time are borrowed

The ashes on our foreheads remind us of the temporariness of all things and all peoples. When we were born, we were born with a term store...there death. Death is a sure part of the story of everyone born on earth.

Our life is borrowed. Our time is borrowed. In a time we do not know, we will return to ashes from where we were born, we came from

**Roach flies in to start Pacquiao buildup**

LAS VEGAS—Manny Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach arrived yesterday from Los Angeles to oversee the preparations of the world five-division champ's February 12 title fight with Shane Mosley at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Roach was accompanied by cornerman Joel Jamilla and MMA fight workout coach Justin Wren. Pacquiao, who is already doing light training under Rodney Hernandez, will continue his training at the Elorde Gym in Quezon City. —Ray Lavina

# SPORTS

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# Nationals eye third straight

## Test Express; B'men face Aces

By Jane Hanano

SMART GILAS Pilipinas is just a few victories away from achieving its immediate goal in the FIBA Commissioner's Cup.

After downing heavyweights Talk 'N Text and Alaska, the national team aims to take another step closer to the playoffs when it steps up the newly acquired veterans of the ASEAN Express today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

"Our goal is to be in the playoffs and we have now made two big steps," said Smart Gilas coach Rajko Toroman.

The Nationals (2-1) are three victories away from qualifying to the next round.

The Express, who received championship jewel Danny Seigle, Steiner Ortiz, Dondon Hontiveros and Paul Israel in a trade with Sen. Miguel Zubiri, recently lost to the Talk 'N Text Tropang Texters using their new lineup.

"The trade may be for the future but I think the (c) is very strong," said Toroman.

To clinch a two-game duel, ASEAN team manager Allan Gregorio and the Express (1-2) have replaced Jeremy Robinson with Alpha Ramirez, drafted by the Washington Wizards in 2009 out of DLSU. Robinson is in LIONESIA Division I.

Rangers averaged 18.9 points over 20 games for the Rio Grande Valley Vipers of the NBA (I) League in 2009.

The Ateneans are also set to unveil a new import when they tackle the Alaska Aces in the other game. Daniel Young, who was drafted by the Seattle Supersonics in 2004, will replace Ira Brown.

Meanwhile, the PBA Board of Governors will tackle the proposed sale of the Barako Bull franchise to Phoenix Petroleum Philippines on March 15.

Barako Bull will need a two-thirds vote from the board for the Sablikab to sell its league rights to Phoenix, the PBA's main sponsor cut its ties of its games.

ALLBRICH! Ateneo de Manila's Ateneo Blue Eagles' Rabi 'N Text import Paul Harris (from behind) in a recent game. At left is Marcus Douthit. —JAMES CHUA

# Road Warriors tap Salamat, Reyes, Fil-Ams

By Jasmine W. Payo

A PROSPECTIVE top rookie pick and several champion collegiate players make the MPTC NLEX Road Warriors one of the early favorites in the PBA Developmental League.

Gilbert Hodge, a 6-foot-5 Filipino-American described as "very powerful," is expected to bolster the Road Warriors' campaign in the pro league's first tournament starting this Saturday at the FilOil Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Road Warriors also tapped Eric Salamat, a key cog in three time UAAP champion Ateneo, and the core of former NCAA titleists Sebastian led by Calvin Abueva.

"We're not looking for every player to be a star," said NLEX coach Beaty Fernandez. "We need stars, but we also need players who can come off the bench and complement the stars."

The Road Warriors will go up against 12 other squads in the D League Foundation Cup.

"Hodge is a very powerful guy," Fernandez, said of the Hawaii-Pacific U recruit.

Other Filipino-American suiting up for the Road Warriors are Carl Matthew Dalman, Cody Torres, Christopher Ellis and Christine Reyes, the brother of Talk 'N Text guard Ryan Reyes.

"We've formed a very competitive team," Rodrigo Franco, president and CEO of the Manila North Tollways Corp., said during the team launch on Monday night at the NLEX corporate in Balintawak.

# Azkals shiver in biting cold at Japan training venue

HARD Former Real Gloser and Ian Arnaiz (from left) pause for a moment shot during Tuesday's training in Gotemba City.

By Cedrik P. Tupas

THE AZKALS BRAZILIANS doesn't seem to pose a problem for the Philippine football team, at least on the first day of their training in Japan.

Hosing up in Gotemba, a city nestled on a plateau at the southeastern foot of Mt. Fuji, the Azkals—most of whom were experiencing sub-zero temperature for the first time—were hardly bothered by the zero-degree temperature as they went through passing and shooting drills at an artificial pitch.

The Azkals are toughening up for the return leg of their AFC Challenge Cup qualifying duel with Mongolia in cash-strapped Ulaanbaatar on March 15.

The team holds a 2-nil edge against Mongolia after the first leg at the Panaad Stadium in Bacolod City last Feb. 9.

The Mongolians need to win by at least three goals to oust the Filipinos and advance to the group qualifying in Kuwait against host Myanmar, Bangladesh and Palestine from March 21 to 25.

"Trained at zero degree earlier," said Azkals skipper Aly Borromeo on the team's official social network site Twitter (@Aly811). "All the boys didn't realize it until the cold bus touch."

"(Weather) Also in Japan. (It's) cold but amazing," said defender Anton del Rosario (@Anton_delro).

"Very clean, great soccer complex and great food," added Del Rosario in describing the facility in Japan, the top team in Asia.

"The team is OK, there's roughing because of the cold but we are OK," Chieffy Caligdong, the scorer of the opening goal in the first leg, also said on twitter.

The Azkals will play a tuneup match against a university team today. Another test match is scheduled on Friday, before they fly to Ulan Bator on March 13.

Shortly after arriving in Japan, Azkals team manager Dan Palami moved to quell concerns that "distractions" off the pitch were hampering their preparations for the Mongolia duels.

Palami did not specify these distractions, although star striker Phil Younghusband has been in the news recently because of rumors of his links with celebrities.

"I would like to unequivocally assure everyone that the coaches and I are taking all steps necessary to ensure that the Azkals always give their best," Palami said in a statement.

Two members of the team—Juani Sobio and Simon Greatwich—are expected to join the team on Thursday while Fou Jeanson and Jason de Jong will be with the team in Ulan Bator a day before the match.

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# Abap pushes 'Suntok Ginto,' plans tough SEAG team

By Cedrill P. Tapao

THE AMATEUR Boxing Association of the Philippines vowed to send the "best available talent" for the Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia later this year, even as it sought public support for its "Suntok Ginto" fund-raising drive for the 2012 London Olympics.

Speaking at a special session of the PSA Forum at Emerald Restaurant in Manila yesterday, Abap secretary general Herrick Dooperkhan said they are fielding a team that will strongly contend for gold medals.

The Abap had earlier declared it will send its second team to the Sagittarius meet since its elite boxers will be focusing on qualifying for the Olympics next year. But the assemblies, winners of the PSA's 2010 of the Year award, is changing its plan.

"First amateur] are well be there to win the gold," said Dooperkhan.

"We will send the best that we have," Abap executive director Ed Picson said.

The country won five gold medals, one silver and three bronze medals in the previous SEA Games in Laos, and the Abap is confident that the harvest will be matched if not surpassed in Indonesia.

Picson said they have lined up at least seven international exposures for the national boxers, including two training camps in Kazakhstan and India. He said they are also looking to join the King's Cup in Bangkok, a tournament in Denmark and the China Open later in the year.

Picson said the "Suntok Ginto" drive has drawn several donors, including companies under Alaga chair Manny V. Pangilinan.

Mendoza has committed P1 million to the program, while Maynilad has given P1 million.

Cecilio Pedro of Lanuginosa Gerry also donated P1 million for the boxing program.

"We want to highlight that this effort is not just for our boxers, coaches and sparmen," said Picson. "If Filipino icons together and believe, the job of our boxers will be easier. It should be a national effort."

Boocon can contribute through Suntok Ginto drop boxes at SM Malls all over the country, Picson said.

## *WBC mourns Salud's passing*

By Bernie Hortaleza

THE ORGANIZATION has helped usher officially mourned the passing of lawyer-sportsman Rodrigo "Rudy" Salud.

World Boxing Council president Jose Sulaiman showed three days of mourning in the boxing world and called for the condolences of the family and friends of the one-time WBC secretary general and chair of its ratings committee.

Salud, who wrote the WBC's constitution and by-laws, passed away Monday.

Sulaiman said Salud ran long time. Mendez. In fact, when Sulaiman turned down Salud's condition adding a man for the worst months, he told the mayors "I am thinking the Mayor of Guadalupe Mendez to pay for my dear friend Rodrigo."

Yesterday, Sulaiman said "I really feel terribly, terribly sad and I just pray to God that he is resting in everlasting peace. I was always thinking of him."

Sulaiman said Salud was "my mentor and when I came here work at the convention and saw how well he led the meetings and guided the discussions in style, I really learned very much from him. He was truly a great man."

At the PBDC convention in Manila in 2006, Sulaiman handed Salud the WBC's "Lifetime Achievement Award." Sulaiman noted then Salud was "the lifetime honorary secretary general of the WBC."

Salud also studied the constitution and by-laws of the Philippine Basketball Association and was its legal counsel when the league was founded in 1975 until the distinguished Leo Prieto as its first commissioner.

Salud served the pro league with distinction until 1992. It was during his term as commissioner from 1986 to 1992 that the PBA reached new heights of success.

# Carlos fires 71; Pinoys tie Thais

By Ray Leaño

LIPA CITY—Jobbin Carlos was the lone pinoy to break par—a one-under 71—yesterday as Philippines team 1 shared top spot with Thailand after the rain-shortened first round of The Monticello-Junior Tours Championship at the Mt. Makiling Golf and Country Club here.

Bucking a double bogey-5 on hole No. 11, Carlos showed the Filipinos alongside the steady Thais with 15-5 totals in the four-to-play, three-to-count tournament held in honor of the late Sandra "Mommy" Mercurillo, prime mover of the jungolf movement in Asia.

Also scoring for the host squad were Asian Games silver medalist Miguel Tabuena with a 75 and reigning national champion Clyde Mondilla with a 76. Gio Gonzalinnguez's 77 did not count.

Thailand showed no depth, dressing a 77-from Rooin Adisomsin, a 74 from Sutasawn Wiwatsorthon, and a 75 from Manpong Intthong. The 77 of Inampod Rattanawan was discarded.

"It was hard—not there because of the strong winds and the sudden downpour—but made the greens slower," said the 18-year-old Carlos, winner of the 2009 Visayas-regional Subic Invitational Championships.

Carlos, who is on homeschooling in Mayorquez, Bulacan, is here more time for golf, birdied the first from 35 feet before nailing two more on the ninth and 12th. He could have scored better were it not for that three-footer he missed for par on number four, an earlier that eventually left him with a double bogey-on No. 15.

The 16-year-old Tabuena, who is turning pro after this tournament, said the rains wiped out whatever advantage the Filipinos had against the Thais and the three other visiting teams.

"We've been practicing here for the last three weeks, but it's exactly true that it rained," said Tabuena, who dropped birdies 3, 5 and 7 before replicating Carlos' double bogey-on the par-5 No. 1-6.

Mondilla also got a cut on the par-4 No. 16 when he was penalized two strokes for hitting the wrong ball.

Playing from 2 was a distant third at 232, 83 strokes off their pace, as it drew a 74 from Juan Asuncion and two of the three 79s from Kenneth Kiuco, Raquel Zaragoza and JP De Claro.

The Singaporeans ended fourth with a 235 total, followed by Chinese Taipei at 240 and Guam at 256.

Action in the girls division starts today with international studio Unnie Garcia, Sarah Jane Alaska and reigning national champion Irma Calma making up Pi-1 Team 1. Princess Bagwal, Danielle Uy and Sheryl Villanueva comprise Team 2.

JOBBIN Carlos watches his tee shot on No. 1.

# Melo, Amare lead Knicks past Jazz

NEW YORK—Carmelo Anthony scored 34 points and Amare Stoudemire added 31 as the New York Knicks beat the Utah Jazz 131-109 on Monday.

Anthony and Stoudemire combined to make 20 of 31 shots, three more on the bench for the entire road period. Stoudemire departed long before the third ever ended, shooting 12-of-15 to just 24 minutes, and Anthony soon joined him after his first 30-point game with the Knicks.

Toney Douglas had 20 points as the Knicks moved a game ahead of Philadelphia for sixth place in the Eastern Conference.

Al Jefferson scored a season-high 26 points and grabbed 12 rebounds for the Jazz.

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# Donaire highlights Elorde Awards night

HOMERO Donaire, who is slowly taking the trail blazed by pound-for-pound icon Manny Pacquiao, will be honored as one of the top boxers of the past year during the 11th Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Memorial Boxing Awards and Banquet of Champions on March 19 at the Ballroom of the Sofitel Philippine Plaza.

Donaire enjoyed 2010 with a fourth round knockout of Wladimir Sidorenko last December to wrest the vacant WBC Continental and American bantamweight title.

His other wins during the year included a third round knockout of Manuel Vargas to regain the WBA super flyweight interim world title in February and an eight-round TKO of Hernan Marquez in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in July to retain the WBA super flyweight title for world crown.

Donaire joins nine veteran world champions Jerry Pelayo and Dennis Nieves in the elite cast of 2010 world champions outside of Pacquiao.

Pacquiao will also be the guest of honor and speaker during the rite.

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## Goodbye, Mr. President

BABE EYE

*Barah Trinidad*

"Where will him to keep it up, don't look off." he had told my feeling with Manila to after I got slapped with a libel suit for exposing a sexual attack on a Thai female volunteer by one national sports official, a military officer, in 1996.

He readily offered expert bail for me, to insist that case would prosper.

The suit was settled by the court.

The accused official was forced to resign from the national sports scene.

Of course, there's renewed guilt on my part since

I was never able to thank him.

My wife, who helped the lawyer initially protecting, said she was utterly saddened by Henry's death early in January. She like him, too.

It was not the first time we teamed up.

He also took on media investigations, including Pedro Rubio of Lanuginosa Gerry, also donated P1 million for the boxing program.

"We want to highlight that this effort is not just for our boxers, coaches and sparmen," said Picson. "If Filipino icons together and believe, the job of our boxers will be easier. It should be a national effort."

Boocon can contribute through Suntok Ginto drop boxes at SM Malls all over the country, Picson said.

I was initially given the assignment to write the lead obituary for yesterday's paper.

But for the first time in my career, I gasped, somewhat lost by the magnitude of Dayah.

Thanks to Ronnie Sarmiento, a trusted, respected ally of Lahui, who rescued me out of my dilemma.

I could not muster enough courage to chronicle the great deeds and immense accomplishments of this man who, by his favorite words, took me to my knees the first day I met grandson the Philippines never had.

So, RIP, not too much, since I humbly request Rep. Manny Pacquiao to please find time and say a few words of farewell to today's unheralded neurologist and executive director of the Philippine Sports Commission.

The World Boxing Council would build a monument for Jose M. Sulaiman to commend Rodrigo Salud, the founding secretary general who crafted the constitution and by-laws, for invaluable in the Boxing Hall of Fame.

There should also be a telling of the impatient 100-point in a next world championship bout, possibly Pacquiao's, in Las Vegas.

Goodbye Mr. President.

## SPORTSWATCH

### EP Roosterville cockfest Friday

THE GENIUS of Big Event cockfests at Pasay City Cockpit resumes on Friday as the EP Roosterville Cock Derby offers a select group of cockers and general breeders from the Visayas and Mindanao will compete.

Main race Eddie Plaza sabungan then 96 fights will be held.

Big stars at the PCC are the Wilderico Cock Derby of Mayor Nelsonco and Novelle on March 19 and the MBL Special 8 Cock Derby of Tony Lasala on March 26.

### P200,000 at stake in WTJ derby

A SPECIAL 2-race derby with P200,000 in guaranteed prizes slates on Thursday at the WTJ Sports and Amusement Center in Makati.

The event, with 10 or more entries expected, will be presented by WTJ owner/sponsor Tobby Tan in P5,000 and non-winners bet P1,000.

Meanwhile, the Lyceum Gamecock Breeders Association will host its first derby at WTJ this year under race president Bryan Paez on March 11 and 12. Entry fee is P11,000 and recipient receives 1 cash members.

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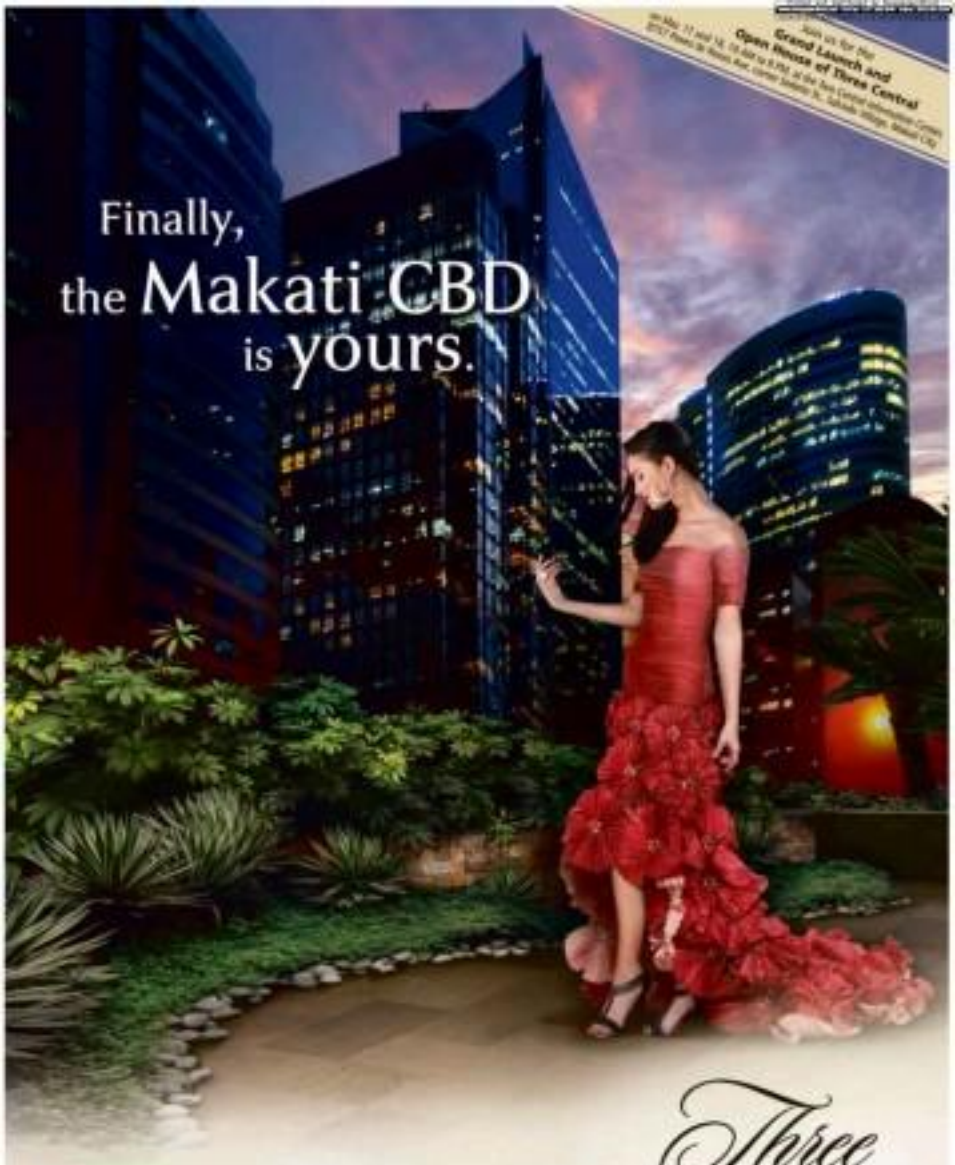

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**DID YOU KNOW**

CEBU CITY is the biggest city in Metro Manila with a land area of 121.7 sqkm, or nearly a third of the 619.5 sq km covered by the National Capital Region.
**Zuhairi Zoraida Jaquier Hussein**

# PNP launch 'Sky Police' to go after criminals, keep track of traffic situation

By Marlon Ramos

DON'T be surprised if you suddenly hear helicopters hovering around your neighborhood.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) yesterday deployed three Robinson 44 NE helicopters to conduct aerial surveillance patrol and anticrime operations in Metro Manila and adjacent provinces.

Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said the "Sky Police" program was aimed at providing faster police response to crimes reported in the metropolis.

"This is primarily for crime fighting, but the helicopters can also be used in other emergencies such as disaster response," he said reporters after the program's launch in Camp Crame.

Robredo admitted that the PNP had bought the aircraft previously for the Sky Police program although it was only now that they were being used for the purpose.

However, a check made by the Inquirer showed that the understanding was actually just a relaunch of a similar project implemented by then PNP chief Director General Jesus Verzosa in 2009.

The PNP had purchased the choppers for over P100 million as part of its P16 billion capability-enhancement program.

Equipped with a high-resolution camera with infrared imaging, Robredo said the helicopters were capable of conducting night patrol and video recording.

He added that the police aircraft could fly straight for four hours before refueling.

"Of course, this will also assist us in our antiscar theft effort since they will be deployed together with police vehicles," Robredo said.

Pilots of the PNP Special Action Force will man the helicopters which will be stationed at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City, he said.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief, Director Nicanor Bartolome, meanwhile, encouraged motorbooklers, particularly local government units and the private sector, to support the campaign which would keep the streets safer and help the police pursue criminals on the run.

"It will give officers a bird's eye view of the situation, and they can help our ground units catch criminals with more efficiency," NCRPO spokesperson Senior Supt. Elmundo Cariño said in a separate interview.

He added that two flights would be scheduled in the morning and afternoon, each lasting two hours.

When not in pursuit of criminals, the Sky Police will observe the traffic situation in Metro Manila, he said. *With a report from Mike Morales*

# Cops arrest 8 for kidnap

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A POLICE investigator's instincts on top of his knack for ferreting out the truth resulted in the arrest of the mastermind in the kidnapping of a Malaysian trader.

Marlon Lopera, 31, and his cohorts were arrested in follow-up operations conducted by the Manila police from Monday night until yesterday morning.

The others were identified as Joanna Faria, 30; the kidnap victim's live-in partner; Edel Montalban, 36; the victim's secretary; Francis Tarla, 27; Felizardo Gutierrez, 44; Rolando Manalon Jr., 29; Bernardo Manrique, 36; and a 17-year-old boy.

**Only P4.2M recovered**

Recovered from the group was P4.2 million out of the P16 million ransom that had been paid for the release of kidnap victim Ivo Sin Chee Tong, a Malaysian businessman.

Tong told the police said that several men abducted him from his warehouse in Malabon City at around 6 p.m. on March 6.

According to him, his captors contacted Joanna, his live-in partner, and told her that they wanted P16 million for his release.

He added that afterward, he was ordered to talk to a bank official on the phone and to inform the official that he had authorized his secretary Marcelinas, to withdraw P16 million from his account.

**Released the following day**

Tong said that after the amount was paid, his captors released him the following day, March 7.

He went at once to the Manila Police District (MPD) District 1 which immediately started conducting an investigation.

The speed at which the transaction was conducted, meanwhile, caught the attention of Senior Insp. Peter Stevens who had been assigned to look into the case.

"I was suspicious as to how fast the payoff was completed. [I was also] told that it was Joanna who negotiated for the victim's release," Stevens told reporters.

He added that another thing which struck him as odd was Joanna's admission that she did not haggle with Tong's captors in lessen the amount demanded.

Stevens said that he kept on questioning Joanna about these things until she finally let a slip that she had helped plan the kidnapping.

**Mastermind identified**

She later identified Lopera, whom she said was her former boyfriend, as the mastermind. She also told the police where they could find him.

Based on the information, members of the MPD Station 5 went to the Riviera Mansion on Makiti Street where Lopera was hiding.

He was arrested, along with the 17-year-old boy. Recovered from him was more than P4 million in cash hidden in a

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# Accused in car dealer's murder wants to be state witness

By Julie M. Aurelio

SIX ALLEGED members of the Bonifacio Carnack gang who had also been linked to the murder of a car dealer has sought the permission of the court to allow him be a state witness.

Saying he was not "the most guilty" among the others accused of the murder, Alfred Mendiola is now asking the court to remove him from the list of the accused.

Judge Ma. Luisa Q. Padilla of Regional Trial Court Branch 275, however, said she has not yet received the pleading filed March 8.

The scheduled arraignment yesterday of Raymund Dominguez, one of the alleged masterminds in the murder of car dealer Bruce Evangelista in January did not push through.

Padilla opted to reset the arraignment to March 22 since three motions on the case are still awaiting resolution in court.

"The arraignment will be reset to another date so all of the accused will be arraigned at the same time," the judge said.

Brothers Roger and Raymund Dominguez were present during the hearing, together with their counsel, Jason Ibi.

Camilo Mendiola and Ferdinand Perlitas, who are also on the list of accused were not present despite being served a subpoena.

The accused are facing rap sheets with homicide charges for the death of Evangelista who was abducted on Jan. 13 and whose body was later found in Caloocan City.

The court will also resolve Raymund's request to be transferred to the Bulacan provincial jail and both Mendiola and Perlitas's motion for a reinvestigation.

In his motion, Mendiola said the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Prosecution Bureau had "provisionally admitted" him as state witness for a 90-day period, with a recommendation after.

"It must be emphasized that it was Mendiola's testimony that clinched the filing of the case against the principals. Without the testimony no other direct evidence was available for the prosecution to prove the elements of the crime," the motion read.

"Other than this direct testimony which positively identifies the accused as the ones responsible for the crime charged except by reason of conspiracy, it cannot be said that Mendiola appears to be the most guilty," said Mendiola's lawyer Willie Nieves.

# 2 men get life sentences for selling shabu to cop

By Tina G. Santos

TWO MEN were sentenced to life imprisonment for drug peddling by a Makati judge yesterday.

Senior Tanod Cabinet Intelligence Officer Ernesto Cabrera identified Ryan Dela Cruz and Jonathan Dela Peñatares of the Makati Regional Trial Court.

Sam Dan was meted out an additional penalties—12 years in jail and a P600,000 fine—after the police found more drugs in his possession after his arrest.

Both men were ordered in a buy-bust operation at the corner of Limbo and Sanda Streets in Barangay Pinagkaisahan, Makati, on Jan. 29, 2009, while selling 0.25 grams of shabu to an undercover policeman.

When the police frisked Sandan, they found more shabu containing shabu on him.

A concerned citizen had tipped off the police about the drug peddling activities of the accused, who were included in the watch list of the Makati Anti-Illegal Drugs Council, court records showed.

Both Torres and Sandiego, however, denied the allegations against them although the court ruled that the evidence presented by the prosecution was sufficient to prove their guilt beyond reasonable doubt.

During the trial proper, the prosecution was able to present the drugs recovered from both men during the entrapment operation, the court noted.

"The defense of denial by both accused was unavailing," the court added. "[It] cannot outweigh the positive and affirmative testimony offered by the prosecution ... The rule is that affirmative testimony is far weightier than a mere denial."

**GUILT ID**
**The kin of some of the 14 workers who were killed when the gondola they were riding in plummeted from the 20th floor of Eton Residences Greenbelt in Makati City light candles to mark the 10th day of their deaths.**

# NCRPO gets go-signal to recruit 1,630 new cops

By Miko Florilles

THE NEW Philippine National Police Chief Director Nicanor Bartolome yesterday said that they had been given the go-signal to recruit 1,630 new policemen from the initial figure of 1,110.

"The increase will be a big help to our deployment here in Metro Manila because our districts have lack the personnel to patrol the streets," he told The Inquirer over the phone.

He said the recruiting scams had begun evaluating applications and those found to be qualified would undergo tests on physical and mental fitness.

According to Bartolome, the NCRPO wants to attain the ideal police-to-population ratio of one officer for every 500 citizens.

However, NCRPO spokesperson Senior Supt. Dionardo Carlos said the prevailing ratio was 1:743.

Those interested in applying should meet the minimum eligibility requirements from either the National Police Commission, Professional Regulation Commission or the Civil Service Commission. They should also be of good standing, without any police records and must not have been convicted of any crime.

# 'Polite' men on motorcycle rob TV reporter in front of home

By Nancy C. Carvajal

PASIG CITY — Police Director Nicanor Bartolome, the new chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), is looking for a few good men to beef up its strength.

NCRPO chief Director Nicanor Bartolome yesterday said that they had been given the go-signal to recruit 1,630 new policemen from the initial figure of 1,110.

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GREENBELT


# Cops arrest 8 for kidnap

From page A[illegible]

traveling bag and a 9 mm pistol.

Upon questioning, he told the police that Macabinao and Francis Tutin also took part in the kidnapping. He also identified the other members of the group.

MPD Station 5 commander, Supt. Felipe Cayaco Jr. said he then coordinated with the police in San Miguel, Bulacan, for the arrest of Rolando and Reinardo Mariano in Barangay Sibul Spring.

Police investigators said they were still tracking down the rest of the criminal enemy.

Lapeña and his cohorts remain detained at the MPD Station 5 pending the filing of a kidnapping for ransom charge against them with the City Prosecutor's Office.

# Breast cancer victim asks readers for help

By Santiago R. Alcantara

JESUSA Argaet is a 64-year old woman who suffers from stage 3 breast cancer. She undergoes chemotherapy at Philippine General Hospital every month.

"So far, doctors have removed the tumors from my right [breast]. They will be operating on the other one soon, hopefully, through the kindness of your readers," Argaet said in Filipino.

ARGOTE

The native of San Pedro, Laguna, has two children. One is married while the other is a third year college student.

"All those years, we have survived on the income my 48-year old husband, Edward earns from being a obstacle driver. I had a difficult time accepting my ailment but then I realized that this happened for a reason," Argaet said.

Argaet can be reached at 2141451, 0933-7919772 or 0920-2112186. Donations can be deposited in her LandBank account (account number 2980000859893).

## METROBRIEFS

### 2 minors rescued from sex dens

TWO 17-YEARS-OLDS have been rescued from night clubs in Caloocan by the Manila City government after the ages of one of the victims were disclosed by Mayor Alfredo Lim for help on March 1. The two girls, along with other persons from their barangay, were rescued in separate raids at Nate's by Lorenzo Jose St. James, the leader of one of the victims. The girls came from Del Pan, Tondo, city social welfare office head Jay de la Fuente said. The two minors were rescued from Heavenly night club and Night Secret night club in Caloocan on March 5. They claimed that they were being forced to have sex with customers and that the club owners had refused to let them go even after they decided that they wanted to leave. The Manila Crime Laboratory found at Station of Western Command, the Manila police, Tambalan Gov. Hermogenes Ebdane and the barangay police jointly rescued the two girls who were later placed in the custody of the Manila social welfare Reception Action Center (RAC). They will undergo counseling and assessment for a need before being returned over to their parents. Lim, meanwhile, ordered De la Fuente to help the girls finish their high school education under the city's Alternative Learning School program. He also promised to give them financial assistance to help their families start a business.

Jaymee T. Gamil

### SUV hits center island in QC; 4 injured

A SPORT utility vehicle that went out of control due to a blown tire injured four people when it smashed into the center island on Quezon Avenue corner the Old Balara Filtration Road along street lights on Sunday afternoon. SPO2 Renato Bicampo said the accident took place at around 1:45 p.m. near the corner of D. Tuason Street in Barangay Santa Lucia. He said that one of the tires of a Mitsubishi Montero L200 SR2 truck, causing the driver to lose control of the vehicle. It smashed into a center island where the workers were standing. Bicampo identified the SUV driver as Jeffrey Lumandas. He and his passenger were both injured, the traffic officer said, along with city hall workers Ariel Dales and Allan Cabrera.

Nancy C. Carvajal

### Navotas hires 160 students for summer jobs

IF YOU happen to drop by Navotas City Hall this summer, don't be surprised to see young faces and smiles assisting you. The Navotas City government has announced the hiring of 160 poor students for various ancillary positions to help them earn money for school this coming school year. "This program aims to maintain the minds of [the] young ... the importance and value of hard work and to make use of their vacation constructively," Mayor John Rey Tiangco said. The project, which will be implemented in April, is in line with Republic Act 7323, otherwise known as the Special Program for the Employment of Students (SPES) program that encourages the hiring of students from poor families. The law states that any person or entity may employ "poor but deserving students" provided they are employed "during summer and/or Christmas vacations." If they are enrolled in the secondary level (under SPES), only students aged 15 to 25 years old whose parents' combined income "does not exceed the annual regional poverty threshold level for a family of six for the preceding year" are eligible. Forty percent of their wages will be paid by the government in the form of a voucher which the students can use to buy their school books or to pay for their tuition. The remaining 60 percent will be shouldered by the employer. In the case of Navotas, 60 percent of the students' salary wage will be paid by the local government, 40 percent, by the local Department of Labor and Employment.

Kristine Felicia Magsaysay

# Iraq shuts down office of protest organizers

BAGHDAD—Two political parties that led demonstrations in Baghdad over the past two weeks said on Monday that security forces controlled by Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki had ordered their offices closed.

The actions, which the government said were merely violations, came amid growing concerns that Maliki's American-backed government is using force and other measures to stifle dissent in the Arab world's first widespread uprising the Arab world to unify his government reforms and hasten elections.

Officials for the Iraqi Nation Party and the Iraqi Communist Party said in interviews that dozens of armed security forces had come to their offices late on Sunday, two days after another round of demonstrations.

Through the parties do not have any seats in Parliament, they are outspoken critics of Maliki's government. They called the evictions illegal of how to weaken them.

"He is breaking the Constitution; he is breaking the law," said Mithal al-Alusi, the leader of the Iraqi Nation Party and a former member of Parliament, referring to Maliki.

Maliki's Cabinet said there was no political motive behind the evictions, which it called part of a longstanding plan to evacuate publicly owned buildings to government use.

"The Government guarantees the activity of all political parties, and what was said about harassing the Iraqi Communist Party is untrue," the Cabinet said in a statement.

One of Maliki's top advisers, Ali al-Moussawi, said the Ministry of Interior was "in the need of these buildings now."

The party officials said that members of Iraq's federal police force, on orders from Maliki's office, arrived at their offices on Sunday and ordered them to leave.

Although the Communist party said their buildings were being requisitioned for government use, Alusi said that he received no explanation on why he was being evicted. He said he would try to persuade Maliki and his aides to reconsider the order.

Alusi said that senior members of Maliki's Dawa Party spoke with him a few days ago and urged him to align with them. But Alusi demurred, saying that he had already given instructions standing behind the protesters and had seen his members run the streets to march with them. "We support the demonstrations," he said. "We are in the streets with our people."

Jassim Hebli, a Communist Party leader, said that at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday about 60 security personnel came to the party's headquarters and the office of the party's newspaper.

They said they had received an order from the Baghdad Operations Command, a special brigade controlled by Maliki, saying the party had to close its offices within 24 hours, Hebli said.

The security officers, Hebli said, did not have any documentation and did not provide an explanation for why the party had to close its offices.

Party officials demanded some sort of documentation and the forces returned about an hour later with a letter signed by Maliki, he said.

Last week, Maliki met privately with Communist leaders and ordered his public statements about the protests, saying that insurgents and terrorists were using the protests to undermine the government.

"The objective of the meeting was to try and convince us not to participate in the demonstrations, and when we did, our participation was the order to close our offices," Hebli said. "But doesn't reflect Maliki's speech about the right of the Iraqis to protest."

Critics said the orders from the file appeared to be his latest effort to crack down on dissenting voices behind demonstrations that have called for antiregime reforms, better public services and more accountability from leaders.

"This is part of the violations of public freedoms and human rights," said Hanaa Edwar, an activist with the civil society group Al Amal. "They feel that these demonstrations are intrusive. Political parties are loyal to their policies are being attacked, and for what?" AP/NYT

**AMATEUR FOOTAGE** A New York Police Department video posted on the Internet of the World Trade Center attack shows smoke engulfing the twin towers after being hit by commercial airliners, as videotaped from a WNYC helicopter on Sept. 11, 2001. The video was released by the National Institute of Standards and Technology on March 3.

# Guantanamo trials set to resume

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama's decision to resume military trials for detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, will open the door for the prosecution there of several suspected 9/11 conspirators, including alleged mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

Obama's order, which reverses his move two years ago to halt new trials, has reignited arguments over the legality of the military commissions, despite ongoing US efforts to reform the hotly debated system.

Air force congressional supporters are trying to transfer some of the Guantanamo detainees to the United States left Obama with few options. And a forced him to reluctantly reversal, at least for now, on his promise to close the prison down.

A handful of detainees have been charged in connection with the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on America, including Mohammed, but the charges were dismissed following Obama's decision to halt military commissions in January 2009.

Administration officials on Monday declined to discuss the potential prosecution of Mohammed or the other detainees. But three Republican leader Mitch McConnell said Guantanamo is a safe location for such a trial.

Guantanamo has been a major political and national security headache for the president since he took office promising to close the prison within a year, a deadline that came and went with the facility still open.

The president and his top defense lawyers all emphasized their preference for trials in federal civilian courts, and his administration blamed congressional meddling for closing off that avenue.

"I strongly believe that the American system of justice is a better part of our arsenal in the war against al-Qaida and its affiliates, and we will continue to draw on all aspects of our justice system—including (federal) courts—to ensure that our security and our values are strengthened," Obama said in a statement.

The first Guantanamo trial likely to proceed against Obama's new order would involve Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, the alleged mastermind of the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole off the coast of Yemen. Al Nashiri, a Saudi al Yemeni detainee, has been imprisoned at Guantanamo since 2006.

Defense officials have said that of around 176 detainees at Guantanamo, about 80 are supposed to face trial by military commission.

AP

# Video shows NYC police helicopter view on 9/11

NEW YORK—New video has surfaced from the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks from a police helicopter hovering near the burning World Trade Center towers in the hope of rescuing survivors from the rooftops, only to find no one there as the buildings topple and crumble.

"The whole tower, it's gone," one officer is heard yelling. "Holy crap, they knocked the whole freaking thing down!"

An officer wonders, "How could it go down?"

The video is part of a cache of information from the attacks handed over by city agencies to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the federal agency that investigated the collapse. The video surfaced on a special website on Monday, but NIST did not know who posted it initially.

The 17 minutes of footage shot from a New York Police Department aircraft and seven radio channels' worth of calls has already been seen but still shocks and disturbs: a chilling aerial view of the burning twin towers and the apocalyptic shroud of smoke and dust that settled over the city.

Only police helicopters were allowed in the airspace near the skyscrapers, and the officers were the only ones shooting images from above. The helicopter flies over the roof as huge gray clouds billow, and aware as they do, pans over to where Manhattan, if one of people can be seen floating the area in clear, sunny day clouded with billowing smoke from the towers.

The chopper lands eventually across the harbor from the towers and the camera pans into the helicopter, showing supercilious officers who were used to rescue people from the roof. The quiets dialogue quickens shock.

"We got out of there at the right time," one officer can be heard saying.

"I know," another officer replies.

The chopper crew watches in the distance as the South Tower falls, the video zooming in to capture the image of the building going down and a huge plume of smoke pulling up.

"Holy s—," another officer can be heard saying.

AP

**EXPENSIVE ROCK** An unidentified woman poses next to a car-sized boulder which smashed Phil Johnson's house in June wouldn't earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand.

# *NZ man auctions boulder that smashed home*

WELLINGTON—A New Zealand homeowner whose house was smashed by a car-sized boulder in last month's earthquake has sold the rock in an online auction for more than $63,000 New Zealand dollars ($44,300).

Christchurch resident Phil Johnson said the 3D ton boulder tumbled down from a hill, overshooting his home, crunched through the roof of his garage and came to rest in his bedroom during the Feb 22 quake. He dubbed the boulder "Rocky."

"It is in pristine condition (just a little bit of concrete dust). Suitable for garden feature, or as in our case a magnificent addition to your living area," Johnson wrote in a sales note.

"Rocky will enhance your indoor/outdoor. Pour cement readily, especially if you hoist him in through the garage and like we did," he wrote.

Proceeds from the auction will be donated to the Red Cross earthquake appeal, according to Trade Me, the website used for the sale.

The magnitude 6.3 earthquake that struck near Christchurch collapsed office blocks, damaged thousands of homes and killed at least 186 people, in one of New Zealand's worst disasters.

The quake sent rocks and debris tumbling into homes and properties in hillside regions, such as Johnson's suburb of Heathcote. In some cases the boulders were a destructive path as they passed through, and in others they settled inside.

"When I went back to my house the big boulder was in the air-raid room," she said. "It's sitting there quite nicely, like it's happy to be there. And we one to know how to get it out."

The winning bid of $90,000 ($63,000 in Johnson's mail, was posted by a dot.Bold promoter, anonymity. NZDS). The second-highest bidder agreed to throw in NZ$10,000 ($7,000) in exchange for a toner running organized by NZDS.

The auction, which ended Monday, "kind" a cool spirit about it, with people bringing the right attitude to the party," Reid said.

NZDS chief executive James Caddington said the company would transport "Rocky" to the bidding list at Master Hire in Bell, about 95 kilometers outside Christchurch, where it is expected to become a spectacular attraction.

AP

# 'Illiterate' 15-year-old Australian sues gov't

SYDNEY—A 15-year-old Australian boy is suing the government after allegedly being left illiterate and innumerate despite being taught at a state-run school, officials confirmed on Tuesday.

The Victoria state education department said it was looking into the claim made by a four 10 boy from Melbourne, who cannot be named for legal reasons, after details of the case were exposed by the ABC, Australia's public broadcaster.

Lawyers for the student reportedly told the Federal Court that their client's future was "questionable" and "seriously disadvantaged" after he "missed out on the requirements of an education" at his school in the Boronia.

They said the state government must promises a "world class" education for students, but the boy—who is also suing for literacy loss of earnings—had been severely bullied at school and left illiterate and innumerate.

The Melbourne court heard the boy had the literacy of a 6-year-old when he was accepted into Year 7, the first year of high school, in 2008, the ABC said.

Although the boy suffers from a severe language disorder, assessors deem hyperactivity disorder, anxiety and a generalized learning delay, he is too intelligent to attend a special needs school, the court also heard.

"The department is defending the claim," a spokesperson for the Victorian Department of Education told AFP. "It would be inappropriate to comment further as the matter is before the courts."

AFP

# Prince Andrew criticized for links to convicted US pedophile

LONDON—The royal family is supposed to furnish Britain's image, but Prince Andrew has generated quite a different hope by consorting with a convicted US pedophile and having romantic trysts with a 17-year-old girl.

"Prince of Sleaze" ran a headline in Monday's Daily Mirror over a story about the 50-year-old Duke of York, who is fourth in line to the throne and a Britain's envoy to promote trade.

"Andrew Doesn't quit even my power pal," the Sun added.

The stories were a long way from the gushing coverage the British media have reserved for Andrew's nephew Prince William and Kate Middleton ahead of their wedding next month.

Andrew has long had a strained relationship with newspapers, who have printed photographs of him enjoying himself on yachts or snorkeling surrounded by topless women, nicknamed him "shirtless Andy" for his use of publicly funded travel.

Andrew is now in hot water over his friendship with New York financier Jeffrey Epstein, who was jailed in 2008 for child sex offenses.

He alleged links to Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's son Saif al-Islam and the son of Tunisia's ousted president, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, also have come under media scrutiny.

The revelations have led to calls for Andrew, the second son of Queen Elizabeth, to lose his voluntary position as a special representative for a government body promoting British businesses abroad, a role he has held since 2001.

Lawmaker Chris Bryant, a member of the opposition Labour Party, said the government should get rid of Andrew's "embarrassing" role.

"They should be absolutely clear: 'We are going to dispense with his services,'" he told BBC radio.

Association with Saif al-Islam and other Libyan figures being courted by western countries has already put others under pressure. On Thursday the director of the London School of Economics quit for having advised the LSE to accept 1.5 million pounds ($2.4 million) to 2009 from Saif's foundation.

A royal source said the prince had "done nothing wrong" and had been no suggestion of any impropriety on his part because there has been none at all," the source told reporters. "You won't be seeing him and Mr. Epstein on a photograph again."

Sarah Ferguson, who divorced the prince in 1996, said he was a "firm sore mate" who worked strenuously for Britain.

"The duke is a man who does not know how to tell an untruth or behave dishonorably," she told the London Evening Standard.

She admitted that she had accepted 15,000 pounds from Epstein to help pay off her debts, a move she described as a huge mistake.

Reuters

# The WORLD

Lita Lorente B. Sulco

# Refugee crisis worsening in Libya

TRIPOLI—As wealthier nations send boats and planes to rescue their citizens from the violence in Libya, a new refugee crisis is taking shape on the outskirts of Tripoli, where thousands of migrant workers from sub-Saharan Africa have been trapped with scant food and water, no international aid and little hope of escape.

The migrants—many of them illegal immigrants from Ghana and Nigeria who have long countered an impoverished underclass in Libya—live amid piles of garbage, sleep in makeshift tents of blankets strung from fences and trees, and breathe fumes from a trench of excrement dividing their camp from the gleaming lot of Tripoli's airport.

Six dinner on Monday night, two men killed a scrawny, half plucked chicken by dunking it in water boiled on a garbage fire, then hacked it apart with a dull knife and cooked it over an open fire. Some residents of the camp are as young as Imran Iqbalu, 9 days old, who arrived on his second day of life and has yet to see a doctor. Many refugees said they had seen deaths from hunger and disease every night.

The airport refugees, along with tens of thousands of other African migrants lucky enough to make it across the border to Tunisia, are the most desperate contingent of a vast exodus that has already sent almost 200,000 foreigners fleeing the country since the outbreak of the popular revolt against Col. Moammar Gadhafi nearly three weeks ago.

Their departure has left Libya's economy in ruins, and its future is in doubt. Many Libyans say the African workers were the backbone of the country's construction industry, and the migrants' absence will cripple efforts to rebuild. Libya's new rulers, the rebels who have taken control of the country's east, have also accused Gadhafi of using African mercenaries to suppress the uprising.

Gadhafi has brought African soldiers to kill some of them, as if they are black people they have been, said Samson Addo, 31, who said residents of Ezeriyah, a rebel-held city, had known him so badly that he could no longer walk.

Sub-Saharan Africans make up a vast majority of the estimated 1.5 million illegal immigrants among Libya's population of 6.5 million, according to the International Organization for Migration. Many were desperately poor people made even more so by investments of up to $3,000 each to pay smugglers to bring them across Libya's southern border for a chance at better work in its oil economy.

Their flight has emptied the streets of thousands of day laborers who played a crucial, if largely unheralded, role in sustaining Libya's economy. Their absence has crippled a wide-reaching construction projects that had been rising across the skyline.

They are trapped in part because most lack passports or other documents necessary to board a plane or cross the border. Few can afford a plane ticket. They say they are afraid to leave the airport or try their luck on the roads to the border for fear of assaults by Libyan citizens or at militia checkpoints.

They complain bitterly of "enslaved by their home governments, which have failed to help evacuate them even as frigates, freighters and Chinese migrant workers who crowded the airport a week ago have found a way out.

And international aid workers, who have raced to embassy to the front rule of these tents camped on the Ezeriyah to say the migrants trapped at the airport remain beyond their reach. The Libyan government's tight security and the threat of violence on the streets of Tripoli have apparently prevented any international aid groups from reaching the makeshift camps.

"We are spending out of freighter," said Jean-Philippe Chauzy of the International Organization for Migration, referring to the east-Libyan city that is the headquarters of the rebellion, "but unfortunately because of the conditions we can't help them out of Tripoli."

The outbreak of violence in Tripoli around Feb. 20 sent migrants of all kinds fleeing for the airport. Until recently, desperate hordes of all nationalities were sleeping packed together on the floors of the terminals or in the fields and parking lots outside. Guards with whips and clubs beat them back to clear the entrances.

Despite Colonel Gadhafi's hostility pan-African rhetoric, racial xenophobia is common here. Many Libyans, ethnically Arab, look down on Chinese, Bangladeshis and darker-skinned Africans, in that order. Many African refugees here said in discussions on the Tunisian border on Libyan-often addressed them as "slaves."—Associated New York Times News Service

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BUSINESS

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# DBP gets regulator's nod to sell $300M in bonds

## Proceeds to be used to jump-start gov't infra program

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEVELOPMENT Bank of the Philippines has secured the regulator's approval to raise $300 million from a bond sale.

DBP officials said proceeds from the sale would be used to fund the government's infrastructure projects.

According to Dbra Guinguinto, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas deputy governor, the central bank has approved in principle the DBP plan to sell bonds in the international capital market. That move, he said, would help jumpstart the government's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program.

"The fund-raising activity will support projects under the PPP program," Guinguinto said, adding that preparations for the bond flote are already underway.

(BSP-DBP) P3, B3

**INDICATORS**

**PESO-DOLLAR RATE**
March 8, 2011
43.465

**STOCK MARKET**
March 8, 2011
12.39

**Shares close up**

SHARE PRICES yesterday inched up for the fourth straight session after strong local corporate earnings announcements attracted investors to bottom-fishing.

MARKETS P2

# State visit on the cheap

Bi is first for the presidency and the local aviation industry. Presidente Benigno S. Aquino III took the unusual step of flying via Gulfstream-owned budget carrier Cebu Pacific to Jakarta for his Indonesian state visit.

According to one source, the presidential party (booked over half of the seats on the Monday night commercial flight in accommodation Cabinet members and the traveling staff).

No, the President wasn't trying to pull off a media stunt by flying on the cheap. Instead, our sources said he had to be in Jakarta first thing in the morning, and Cebu Pacific was the only airline that flies to the Indonesian capital on Monday evenings (flights at that PAL depart Manila in the morning).

And P-Noy apparently didn't mind taking a three-hour flight with limited legroom.

To be fair, we're told that the President will fly back on a more spacious PAL flight on his return leg from Singapore. Dante L. Lanot

## New faith' shaken

THE Metrobank group, which had wanted to foray into Islamic banking through investment arm First Metro Investment Corp., is shelving this plan for now due to certain restrictions in the charter of state-controlled Al-Amanah Bank, the only bank with the Congressional franchise to engage in Islamic banking in the country.

Sources said that FMIC had ordered a big foreign Islamic institution to back up a potential bid to acquire Al-Amanah, if and when the Development Bank of the Philippines was ready to bail out the bank. FMIC would have been willing to cede majority control to the foreign partner, which has the expertise to engage in this type of banking that drives charging or accepting interest payments for the use of money.

But alas, the charter of Al-Amanah bars a 40-percent foreign equity ceiling, which was not palatable to FMIC's potential partner. Or unless FMIC gets a new foreign partner that's willing to settle for a significant minority stake—or Al-Amanah's charter gets amended (which is a time-consuming process)—the plan's landing down is on the bank-banker he now. Boris C. Dantes

## No sale of cheap shares

ALPHALAND Corp., the property arm led by tycoon Enrique Razon Jr., Bobby G. Goquiolay and other popularly "BGG") plans to sell its fifty new shares and none of its secondary shares when it conducts a follow-up offering by the third quarter of the year—contrary to earlier reports that it will be the issuance of new shares to existing shareholders at a discount to market price.

Alphaland last week said that the issuance of new shares to existing shareholders was simply the result of the conversion by holders of advances or deposits for future subscriptions made or committed by original shareholders consisting of the Ashmore group and BGG's group of companies.

Moreover, the issue price of P16 per share is the same as the original issue price to these shareholders, the group said.

It was also pointed out that there will be the usual lock-up period of 180 days when these additional shares are listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

But Alphaland has yet to demonstrate how much it needs to raise from the sale of primary shares to the public. Doris C. Dumlao

## Another SEMA fight

A BANKING official of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) has been suspended for allegedly not acting on a legal opinion saying that it was time for the free port's top executive to step down.

SBMA Deputy Administrator for legal affairs Randy Escalonga was suspended for three months by SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza for "administrative violations" after the bureau penned a legal opinion pointing out the expiration of the latter's tenure along with that of SBMA Chair Felicisimo Salonga.

Escalonga's suspension order was posted by Arreza in November 2010, on charges of misusing funds intended for employees in SBMA subsidiary.

Escalonga has denied the allegations and has since filed graft and corruption charges before the Ombudsman against Arreza.

SBMA is one of the few government agencies whose top executives have not yet been replaced since President Aquino assumed leadership. Paolo Montecillo

## Running mate in holding pen

OSCAR Salazar, one of the most recognizable faces in the business process outsourcing industry is handing the post as president and chief executive of the Business Processing Association of the Philippines to the next few weeks.

According to sources, the guest is still on for the next BPAP luncheon, who will also serve as the face of the country's BPO industry on the global stage. In the meantime, Salazar, 47, is still in charge of BPAP information and research director Gillian Joyce Wenke, daughter of former Prime Minister of the Philippines Cesar Virata and stage legend Ate Vilma.

Aside from promoting the local BPO industry in the world, Salazar is also passionate about his running, which he says he has been doing before the sport even became fashionable. Proof of his mettle as a runner is his participation in the 2:00 kilometer human (f)ornamentation, which commemorates the Death March.

There's no speak reason for Salazar's departure from BPAP. It just must be time for the running exec's self... recruiting. (Mc-gold L. Ile)

## BIZ BUZZ
*By the staff*

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council
HOUSING AND LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD
SOUTHERN LUZON REGION IV-A

NOTICE

JANE BANK REALTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (Owner/Developer) has filed with the Board a request for issuance of Order for the sale of Subdivision and Condominium Project consisting of:

BANK REALTY HOME AND GRAND GARDEN VILLAS" located at Brgy. Lanzahan, Municipality of Tiaong, Province of Quezon, Region IV-A, Tiaong, Quezon

Lot 4-B, Psd-04-013972, Being Lot 4, Psd-04-013972, Cad-1 & 2, Psd-04-0409, Cad-1 & 2, Psd-04-013970, and Lots 2-A & 3-B, Psd-04-013971, covered by TCT nos. T-067-2007-000012 to T-067-2007-000052. The subdivision plan was approved by the Land Management Services (LMS) (Psd-04-013970 to 2-A&3-B).

All persons relative thereto shall upon request and payment of processing fee is available for examination during business hours by any person having legal interest therein.

Board Appellate Committee, the above-titled project is deemed set to perfection in accordance therewith and shall be set for issuance of the Corporate Permit not less of publication.

Calamba City, Laguna, 17 February 2011.

(Sgd.) ANA FE L. KATIGBAK-III, SEC.RTARIA, DR.
Member

(PSN - Mar. 2, 9 & 16, '11)



NOTICE OF LOSS/THEFT/DESTRUCTION/ MUTILATION/DEFACEMENT
("Notice")

Notice is hereby given of the loss/theft/destruction/mutilation/defacement of the following stock certificate(s) issued by Ayala Land, Inc.:

| Registered Owner | Serial No. | Face Value |
|---|---|---|
| MARVEN ROSCOE (ITF) | 14826204 | 37,500.00 |
| MARVEN ROSCOE (ITF) | 14826205 | 256,570.71 |
| MARVEN ROSCOE (ITF) | 14827987 | 124,848.00 |

Any person/entity other than the registered owner who has claim/interest on the above Stock/s is requested to notify immediately the BOND SERVICING DEPARTMENT, Land Bank of the Philippines, 28th Floor, LandBank Plaza, 1614 Del Pilar cor. Dr. Quintos St., Malate, Manila. Any such claim presented or likelihood to/s after the period of ten (7) days counting from the date of the fourth publication of this Notice shall no longer be entertained.

* First, Second, Third or fourth, as the case may be.

(PSN - March 2, 9 & 16, '11)



NOTICE

Republic of the Philippines
City of Cebu
Office of the City Mayor

WANTED HOTEL OPERATION

The City government of Cebu through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites interested parties to participate in the bidding for the lease of the City-owned property consisting of a parcel of land with an area of 1,000 square meters, more or less, located at the Cebu City Sports Center and covered by Transfer Certificate of Title No. 174-2010000001 and Tax Declaration No. 010-00-0001, both in the name of the City of Cebu, Philippines, for the purpose of hotel operation.

Interested parties may obtain their bidding documents from the office of the BAC Chairman, Atty. Eduardo P. Rama, Jr. Rm. 204 of the City Treasurer's Bldg., Sanciangko St., Cebu City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

A pre-bid conference shall be held on April 1, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the Conference Room of the City Mayor's Office, 4th Floor, City Hall Building.

The City government of Cebu reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any defect therein, and to accept the bid that is most advantageous to the City government of Cebu.

For more information, please call the Office of the BAC Chairman at telephone numbers 255-5454 local 2201 or 2202 or visit the office at the 4th Floor, City Treasurer's Bldg., Sanciangko St., Cebu City.

Cebu City, March 1, 2011.

(Sgd.)
MICHAEL RAMON P. ESPINOSA
City Mayor

(PSN-March 9, 2011)


# DBP gets regulator's . . . From page B1

The government has tapped HSBC, JP Morgan, Credit Suisse, First Boston, and Goldman Sachs as book runners for the bond sale.

According to the government, DBP will use proceeds from the bond sale to lend to private sector companies that, in turn, will invest in public infrastructure projects under the PPP program.

The PPP program is a key component in the Aquino administration's development plan for the country. Under the program, the government will build concessions for public infrastructure projects to interested private investors.

Last Monday, the President and his economic team unveiled the first five PPP projects up for bidding in the first half of the year.

The five projects, estimated to have a collective value of P1.141 billion, are the expansion, operation, and maintenance of MRT 3; expansion, operation and maintenance of LRT; Daang Hari-SLEX Link Road Project; Naia Expressway Phase 2; and construction of North Luzon Expressway and South Luzon Expressway.

"When these projects are finally completed, businesses in the Philippines will find faster ways to transport goods," Aquino was quoted as saying during the launch of the project held last Monday at the head office of DBP.

According to Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, who is spearheading the PPP program, tapping the private sector is a prudent measure to overcome the government's lack of resources to support all the country's infrastructure development needs.

Spending for public infrastructure in the Philippines is estimated at less than 3 percent of the country's gross domestic product. This pales in comparison to the 5 percent average in the region.

# Shares close up

From page B1

pick up blue chips and achieved second-best stocks.

The main share, Philippine Stock Exchange index added 12.20 points, or 0.32 percent, to finish at 3,806.87.

However, trading was slowed across counters as investors were still bent on locking up gains whenever the index breached the 3,900 level. Buying also focused on selected issues as the market remained wary of geopolitical problems that had been causing up global oil prices.

Despite the early index gains, 78 stocks declined, edging out the 68 that advanced, while 45 stocks were unchanged.

The holding firms, mining, oil and property counters fanned up while the financial, industrial and services counters ended to the red.

Value turnover surged to P1.06 billion from the previous day's P1.52 billion. The market drew strength from foreign investors' improved risk appetite, registering net foreign buying of P926 million for the day.

"The market's sustained surge may be attributed to positive corporate results in the most firms reporting on their fourth quarter and full year 2010 operations, and the anticipation of consequent dividend declarations from the bigger blue chips and high profit earners," said Justino Calabroso Jr. of Accord Capital Equities Corp. "Overall, we can say that the underlying mood remains optimistic, even as risk is tempered ... by geopolitical concerns ... and inflation outlook."

Calabroso said that the earnings push would likely be sustained through mid-month.

"Peso's flatness, the market will have to look into first quarter 2011 (earnings) reports before, factoring in the impact of higher inflation for January and February and a possible tweak to (the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas') interest rates." Jerry C. Dandan


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March 15, 2011
9:00am-12:00nn | Strategic Innovation
1:30pm-4:30pm | Reinventing Your Business Strategy

March 21, 2011
9:00am-12:00nn | Choosing Market Segments
1:30pm-4:30pm | Evaluating Market Attractiveness

March 28, 2011
9:00am-12:00nn | Finding Your Own Big Opportunity
1:30pm-4:30pm | Marketing without TV Advertising

APRIL

April 1, 2011
1:30pm-4:30pm | Business Personal Branding Strategy

April 2, 2011
9:00am-12:00nn | Choosing Winning Retail Locations

April 7, 2011
9:00am-12:00nn | Identifying & Avoiding New Business Risk
1:30pm-4:30pm | Critical Skills of Challenge Achiever & Life's Assumptions

April 15, 2011
9:00am-12:00nn | Intrapreneurship, Not Just Entrepreneurship
1:30pm-4:30pm | Gaining Cost Without Gaining Customers

April 22, 2011
9:00am-12:00nn | Effective Managing
1:30pm-4:30pm | Branding Your Product For Greater Profit

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9:00am-12:00nn | Small Area Marketing
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INVITATION TO BID

The Municipality of Tubao through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), hereby invites interested parties duly accredited by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract.

Name of Project : BRGY. WATER IMPOUNDING SYSTEM (EXTENSION OAM)
Location : Caoayan, Tubao, La Union
Brief Description : Rehabilitation of small water impounding system
Approved Budget : P2,000,000.00

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment listed for the project, available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre- Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

Activities Schedule

1. Issuance of Bid Documents – March 7- 30, 2011
2. Pre-Bid Conference – March 16, 2011, 10:00 AM
3. Opening of Bids – March 30, 2011, 10:00 AM

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents for the bidding upon payment of non-refundable amount of P 5,000.00 to the Municipality of Tubao Cashier.

The Municipality of Tubao, La Union reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal, and to reject all proposals at any time prior to the execution of any agreement, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected participants.

For further information, Please refer to:
MR. RUFINO C. ALIM, SR.
Head, BAC Secretariat

(Sgd.) ENGR. ROSEMARY D. MAGNIN
BAC Chairman

(PSN-March 2, 2011)

# Gov't assumes careful stance on PPP funding

## Authorities will only issue 'PPP bonds' when needed, says DOF

By Bernie W. Dominguez

THE GOVERNMENT's investment arm, National Development Co. (NDC), intends to issue bonds in increments "as needed" to help finance public-private projects, Finance Secretary Purisima said in an interview.

While the government, through financial institutions and social service units, is ready to issue up to P200 billion in bonds, Malacañang has yet to green-light the issue, particularly to NDC's, the finance chief said.

Malacañang is particularly keen on the so-called PPP (Public-Private Partnership) infrastructure bonds, denominated in pesos, the proceeds from which will be used to fund development projects, Purisima said.

"In case the gap between a project's financial feasibility gap and economic desirability is substantial, we may decide to come in and help [the proponents] with funding," Purisima said. "We borrow at a lower cost and pass it on to the people now."

He clarified that the government would only make the funds "available as needed."

"For example, if a project needs P1 billion, we will only issue bonds worth that amount," Purisima said.

Purisima further said that financial institutions whom the government had engaged were still working on how funding for PPP projects would be split between the public and the private sectors.

"We have hired a large, reputable international organization, and the Development Bank of the Philippines is set to facilitate the procurement process," he said.

Also, the Department of Finance has been mulling over the creation of a debt and risk management unit as it enters more effort to bring down the country's debt stock gradually from the current 56.2 percent of domestic output to 47 percent by 2016.

According to a Malacañang document, the creation of such a unit at the DOF is meant "to optimize savings."

The paper cited related steps toward this end, including the setting up of a comprehensive debt management system that covers contingent liabilities and PPP-related fiscal risks.

The report added that authorities would also introduce innovative terms and features in the conduct of raising funds.


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| 1,000,000-1,999,999 | 5.00% | 5.25% | 6.00% | 6.50% | 6.75% | 7.50% |
| 2,000,000-4,999,999 | 5.00% | 5.25% | 6.00% | 6.50% | 6.75% | 8.00% |
| 5,000,000 – Above | 5.50% | 6.00% | 6.75% | 7.00% | 7.50% | 8.00% |

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• BLUE PHOENIX
• CEBU DRAGONS
• HUBO DRAGON BOAT TEAM
• IBAGO PILIPINAS
• MAHARLIKA DRAGON
• MANILA BLAZING PADDLES
• MANILA DRAGONS
• MANILA OCEAN PARK DRAGON BOAT TEAM
• ONE PIECE DRAGON SHADOWS
• OMEGAHOT RACING DRAGONS
• PORT PIRELLIANS
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Republic of the Philippines
## CEBU PORT AUTHORITY

### AN INVITATION TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City, invites accredited and duly registered contractors to participate in the public bidding of the following projects:

1. NAME OF PROJECT: ADDITIONAL CONSTRUCTION OF BERTH 11, CEBU SEAPORT

A. Scope of Work :

(a) Security, Safety, Health Supplies and Installation of Barricades and Signages
(b) Supply and Drive Steel Pile (20 L.M.) (1 set)
(c) Supply, Fabricate & Install 1.0 Mtrs x 2.0m Pre-stressed Concrete Pile (Cut-1) (1.0 mtrs. L = 1.20m) (1 set)
(d) Supply & Fabricate Concrete Corbel (Cut-2) (1 set)
(e) Excavation / Dredging of the Berth (+/- 8.0 mtrs.)
(f) Construction of Existing Slope including Boulders, Pile Caps, Reinforcement and Concrete (+/- 1,427 Cu.mtrs.)
(g) Supply, Install Level Luffing Rail Mounted Portal Crane (1 set)
(h) Supply, Install Rail Mounted Hopper (1 set)
(i) Supply, Install Pre-cast Reinforced Concrete Panel (Cut-3) (1 set)
(j) Supply, Install Pre-cast Reinforced Concrete Panel (Cut-4) (1 set)
(k) Fabricate and Reinforce Bi-Pile Caps, Fenderwalls and Second Layer Slabs
(l) Concrete Packing and Grouting of Forms & Offset @ (3.0 CC)
(m) Backfilling
(n) Compaction
(o) Interlocking Pavers
(p) Supply and Install Road Furniture

B. Classification : Medium II for Piers and Harbor

C. Equipment Requirements:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 unit | 20T Truck Mounted / Crawler Crane | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Vibro Hammer / Welding Machine (180 Amp) | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Cutting Torch | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Diesel Hammer with rated energy of not less than 10 Metric Tons | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Mixing Machine (9T cap. min.) | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Batching Plant | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | 20T Truck Mounted / Crawler Crane | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Portable Concrete Cutter / Grinder | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Air Compressor / 4Cu.Mtr. with 2 accessories | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Backhoe with Breaker (0.6Cu. Mtr.) | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Dump Truck (10WH) | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Bar Cutter | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Bender (D32 bars max.) | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Flat Chuck | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Concrete Vibrator (self Powered, 4.5 hp) | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Electric Welder | — Owned |
| 1 unit | 25Ton Excavator | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Concrete Spreader | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Water Truck | — Owned/Leased |

D. Project Duration : 180 CD

E. Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) :

THIRTY EIGHT MILLION, TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY EIGHT THOUSAND, SEVEN HUNDRED EIGHTY ONE PESOS & 63/100 (P38,288,781.63)

1. NAME OF PROJECT: PROVISION OF GOOD PRO QUOTE ALL-RISK INSURANCE FOR ALL CEBU PORTS WORK PART OF BERTH 11, CEBU SEAPORT

A. Scope of Work :

(a) Security, Safety, Health Supplies and Installation of Barricades and Signages
(b) Supply and Drive Steel Pile (20 L.M.) (1 set)
(c) Supply, Fabricate & Install 1.0 Mtrs x 2.0m Pre-stressed Concrete Pile
(d) Driving of Reinforced Rubber Piles
(e) Supply and Drive Steel Pile
(f) Construction of Concrete Cluster, Fender and Cure (1 = 10.00 cu.m)
(g) Supply, Fabricate & Install 1.0 Mtrs x 2.0m Pre-stressed Concrete
(h) Fabricate and Reinforce Bi-Pile Caps, Fenderwalls and Second Layer Slabs
(i) Concrete Packing, Curing and Stripping of Forms
(j) Install Wearing Polymer (5 mm)
(k) Supply and Install Rubber Fenders
(l) Supply and Install Pre-cast Reinforced Concrete Panel (Cut-3)
(m) Excavation / Dredging of Boulders/Rock (+/- 1,000 cu.m)
(n) Hauling of Boulders (Min. 2 km.)
(o) Supply and Install Piles Cloth (2 = 365 sq.m.)
(p) Backfilling (+/- 4.0m) = 40m
(q) Supply, Deliver, Construct Rubber Material
(r) Supply, Deliver and Construct Rubber Marine Materials
(s) Concreting of Pavement including Curing, Grading and Curing
(t) Concreting of Damaged Wall using Crane including Site Preparation and Removal of Debris (1,200mm @ 25 Pumpcrete Design)

B. Classification : Medium II for Piers and Harbor

C. Equipment Requirements:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 unit | 20T Truck Mounted / Crawler Crane | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Cutting Torch | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Diesel Hammer with rated energy of not less than 10 Metric Tons | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Mixing Machine (9T) | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Bridge MT Crane (50T cap.) with Pneumatic Tire Prime Mover | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Vibro Hammer / Welding Machine (180 Amp) | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Air Compressor / 4Cu.Mtr. with 2 accessories | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Portable Concrete Cutter / Grinder | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Backhoe with Breaker (0.6Cu. Mtr.) | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Concrete Vibrator (self Powered, 4.5 hp) | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Bar Cutter | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Bender (D32 bars max.) | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Flat Chuck | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Electric Welder | — Owned |
| 1 unit | 25Ton Excavator | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Concrete Spreader | — Owned |
| 1 unit | Dump Truck (10WH) | — Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit | Water Truck | — Owned/Leased |

D. Project Duration : 180 CD

E. The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) :

EIGHT TWO MILLION, TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY FIVE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED NINETY ONE PESOS & 68/100 (P82,285,591.68)

Prospective bidders must be duly licensed by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board and must submit valid Mayor's/Business Permit, Tax Clearance and PCAB Eligibility Documents.

Bidding Documents may be purchased from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of the Non-refundable fee in the amount of Ten Thousand Pesos (PHP 10,000.00) starting March 9, 2011.

Firms who are interested that is of foreign origin from outside of the Philippines should submit their Pre-qualification Documents (PHP20,000.00) and that the bidder shall pay the fee of Pre-bidding Documents will take place on the submission of Bid Bids.

Pre-bid Conference shall be held on March 22, 2011 (2pm) at the CPA Conference Room.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 9 am, April 6, 2011 (Wednesday). Bid Bids will be opened immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein or to accept such bid as may be deemed most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) MARIO C. TAN
BAC Chairman

Attested by:

(Sgd.) ARMAN B. VILLARIN
General Manager

(PH) March 9, 2011

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTRAL OFFICE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

### INVITATION TO BID
PROCUREMENT OF PRINTING OF VARIOUS EIC MATERIALS AND MEDICAL OF ANCIENT ORGANIZERS

1. The Department of Health (DOH), through the Central Office Bids and Awards Committee (COBAC) now invites bids for the following projects:

| Ref. No. | Name of Contract | ABC (PhP) | Date of Publication / Post (PhP) |
|---|---|---|---|
| DOH-CO(B-10) | Printing of Information Education Communication (IEC) Materials (Standardized for the DOH Field Offices) Batch 1 (2011) | 1,000,000.00 | 1,000.00 |
| DOH-CO(B-11) | Procurement of Printing of Various IEC Materials | 4,000,000.00 | 4,000.00 |

2. The DOH now invites bids from eligible bidders for the procurement of the above-named contracts. Delivery of the Materials for the Items shall be Eligible for the Contract of the Awarding Committee and the DOH Field Implementing Units (FIU) Bidders to Participate in the Bidding Process. Bidders should have completed, within the last five (5) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The similarity of the contract shall be determined by the DOH-COBAC and FIU, and must be at least one (1) of the following:

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Administrative Unit of the Procurement Services-Bids Secretariat and may purchase the Bidding Documents for the contract(s) they intend to bid from the Cash Window and Payment Section of the Accounting Division, upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount stated above starting 9:00 a.m. on this date.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on March 10 to 23, 2011 from the address below and upon payment of the applicable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount stated above.

It may also be downloaded from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Department of Health, provided that Bidders shall pay the nonrefundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

6. The DOH will hold a Pre-Bid Conference and the Submission and Opening of Bids at the address given below and as follows:

| Ref. No. | Particulars | Activities Dates & Times | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Pre-Bid Conference | Submission of Bids / Opening of Bids |
| DOH-CO(B-10) | Printing of Information Education Communication (IEC) Materials (Standardized for the DOH Field Offices) Batch 1 (2011) | 10 March 2011 9:00 am | 23 March 2011 9:00 am |
| DOH-CO(B-11) | Procurement of Printing of Various IEC Materials | 10 March 2011 10:00 am | 23 March 2011 10:00 am |

7. Bids must be submitted to the address indicated above. Bidders must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated below:

| Form of Bid Security | Amount (100 Security Bond for Percentage of the ABC) |
|---|---|
| Cash, cashier's/manager's check, bank draft/guarantee confirmed by a local commercial bank | 2% |
| Surety bond callable upon demand issued by a surety or insurance company duly certified by the Insurance Commission as authorized to issue such security | Equivalent 5% |
| Any combination of the foregoing | Proportionate to share of form with respect to total amount of security |

All bid bonds posted by the bidders of the Bidders' representatives who do not submit at the address below 1 day and shall not be accepted.

8. The DOH reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, or to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

9. For further information, please refer to:

(Office) Secretariat
Building No. 5
Department of Health
Sta. Cruz, Manila
Tel. Nos. 743-1301 to 03 loc. 2401, 2402 or 30

(Sgd.) ROMEO T. LIRIO, MD, MPH, CESO III
Assistant Secretary of Health
Bidding Chairperson

(PH) March 9, 2011

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR
Municipality of San Luis

OFFICE OF THE BIDS & AWARD COMMITTEE

### INVITATION TO BID

The Municipality of San Luis through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified manufacturers/dealers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to submit the corresponding bid(s).

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Contract | Supply and Delivery of One (1) Unit Eligibly Used Backhoe, Crawler Type, Hydro, 20 tons operating weight, Approx. 1.2 cubic meter bucket capacity, with other standard accessories powered by Hydraulic diesel engine |
| Approved Budget for the Contract | P1,800,000.00 |
| Delivery Period | 15 days after notice of award |
| Place of Delivery | Municipal Government site of San Luis, Agusan del Sur |

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 3 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for this project. Eligibility shall be determined based on the Preliminary Examination of Bids under the "Non-Discretionary Pass/Fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All contractors shall be Eligibly Registered and Operating. Bid Security shall be in the form of Bid Bond, Manager's Check, Cash or Cashier's Check. Post-Qualifications and Award of Contracts shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities and basic as follows:

| | ACTIVITIES | SCHEDULE |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Advertisement | February 28, 2011 |
| 2. | Issuance & Availability of Bidding Documents | February 28 - March 9, 2011 |
| 3. | Pre-Bid Conference | March 08, 2011 @ 10:00 a.m. @ Legislative Hall |
| 4. | Submission, Receipt & Opening of Bids | March 11, 2011 1:00 p.m. @ Legislative Hall |
| 5. | Bid Evaluation | March 14, 2011 |
| 6. | Post-Qualification | March 15, 2011 |
| 7. | Notice of Award / Signing of Contract | March 16, 2011 |
| 8. | Notice to Proceed | March 18, 2011 |

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00 to the Municipality of San Luis Treasury Office.

The Municipality of San Luis assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of his bid.

For more details, please contact at Cell # 09393615545

Date of Posting : February 28, 2011
Expiry Posting : February 28, 2011

(PH) March 9, 2011

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## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

SANTOS E. YANUARIA JR.

Please be informed that
**MR. SANTOS E. YANUARIA JR.**
whose picture appears above is no longer connected with
**PUYAT STEEL CORPORATION**
as Professional Sales Representative –
Galvanized Division since August 10, 2007.
PTC Mandaluyong Branch 213 issued a warrant for him, pursuant to the Criminal Cases No. 06C-48-19 888 for **ESTAFA**.
If you have information regarding the whereabouts of the said person, please do not hesitate to call us at 636-5314.

(PH) Mar. 9, 2011

## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

AHLLAN R. APOLONIO

Please be informed that
**MR. AHLLAN R. APOLONIO**
whose picture appears above is no longer connected with
**PUYAT STEEL CORPORATION**
as Professional Sales Representative –
Building Products Division since July 07, 2008.
MTC Mandaluyong Branch 59 issued a warrant for him, pursuant to the Criminal Case No. 10-1502 for violation of **BP 22**.
If you have information regarding the whereabouts of the said person, please do not hesitate to call us at 636-5314.

(PH) Mar. 9, 2011

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region IV - A CALABARZON
DIVISION OF ANTIPOLO CITY

DepED

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Project No. BAC-1-102

## INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education intends to apply the sum of Philippine Pesos (PHP) 10,000,000.00 being the ABC to payments under the contract for Construction of Two (2) Storey Four (4) Classroom Building (1F-4C-Bldg) including Site Development and Other Related Works for the Construction of Antipolo City as follows:

| Item No. | Item Description | Project Duration | Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) | Contract Completion Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Antipolo NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| 2 | Antipolo Region I HS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| 3 | Dalig NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| 4 | Dela Paz NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| 5 | Mayamot NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| 6 | Mayamot Integrated NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| 7 | Mayamot Integrated NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
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| 15 | Mayamot Integrated NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
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| 99 | Mayamot Integrated NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| 100 | Mayamot Integrated NHS | 2011 SEF | ₱ 3,400,000.00 | 120 cd |
| | | Total | ₱ 340,000,000.00 | |

Prospective bidders may purchase complete bidding documents from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Bids submitted shall be opened in the said BAC office in the presence of the bidders' duly authorized representatives. Bidders may bid for one or all items. Late bids shall be rejected. Incomplete and sealed bids must be in a per item basis.

Prospective bidders must follow completely a similar project within the last two (2) years from date of submission and receipt of bids with an amount of at least 50% of the ABC to be bid.

Bidding is restricted to Philippine citizens, sole proprietorships, organizations with at least 60 percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and corporations or organizations of at least 60 percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Instructions to Bidders.

Bidder shall submit a valid Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License and Registration for the type of work and amount of contract.

Bidder's Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) must be at least equal to the ABC.

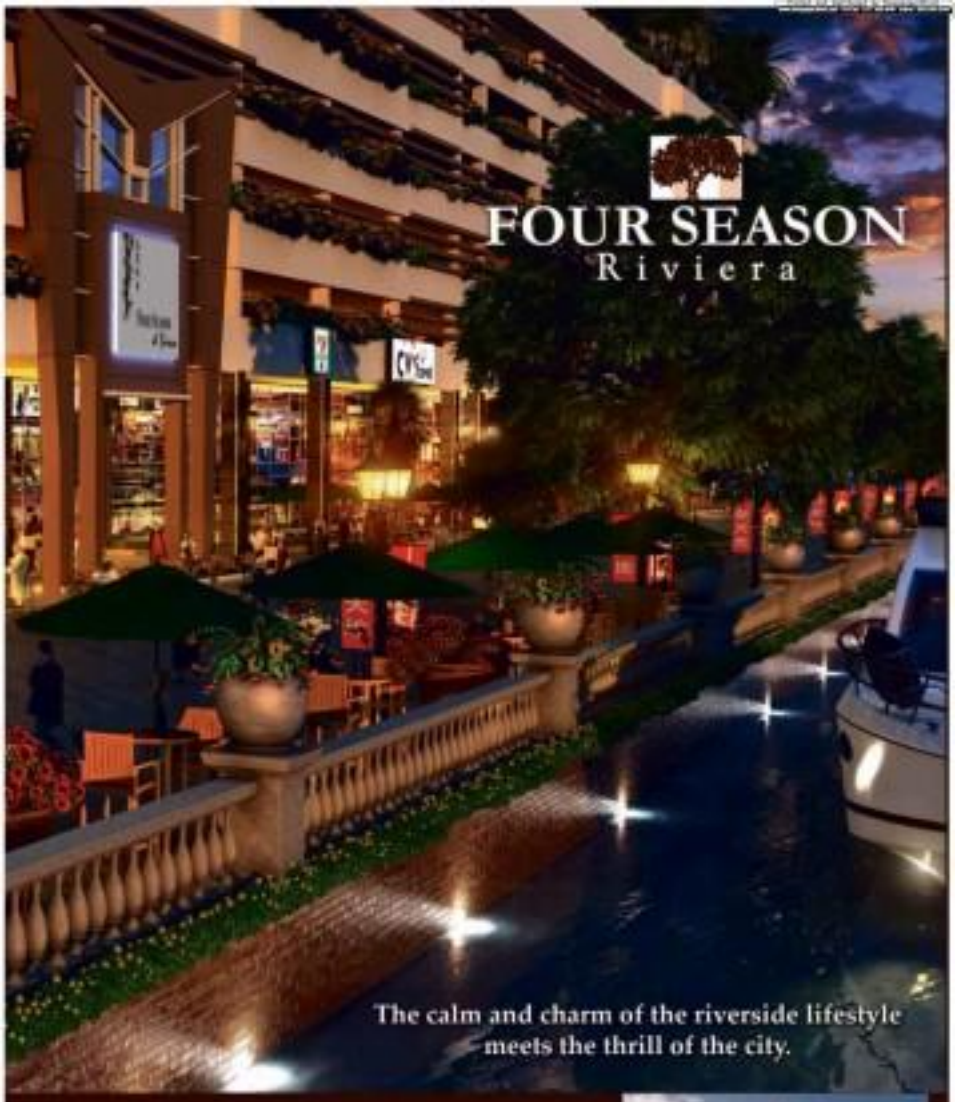
Bidder shall submit a valid Mayor's/Business Permit issued by the city or municipality where the principal place of business of the prospective bidder is located.

Bidder shall submit a valid Tax Clearance per Executive Order 398, Series of 2005, as finally reviewed and approved by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

Bidder shall submit a valid Income/Business Tax Return for the preceding calendar year which shall be stamped received by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions.

Bidder shall submit a valid Audited Financial Statement stamped received by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions for the preceding calendar year.

Bidder shall submit a valid Certificate of Registration and Membership in the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS).

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FEDERAL LAND

# BUSINESS

# PH inflation seen to peak at 7% by late 2011

## But ample food supply to ease consumers' pain, says Citigroup

By Bernice W. Dumlao

THE RISE in Philippine consumer prices is not likely to reach double digit rates this year despite increasing oil prices because of ample food supply, according to Citigroup Global Markets Inc.

The brokerage and securities arm of Citigroup, in a research paper penned by Jun Trinidad, said a "healthier" rise of food prices and ample food-food supply would help ease oil price pressures.

"Inflation may peak in between 6.5 percent and 7 percent year-on-year," Trinidad said. "An elevated inflation rate would dampen consumption but enhance fiscal revenues by 0.26 percent to 0.28 percent of gross domestic product."

Trinidad means that the government is enjoying a windfall in taxes of billions of pesos because rising oil prices are pushing up inflation which, in turn, drives up tax revenues.

"In our existing inflation forecasts, we assume a gradual drift of oil prices to $110 per barrel in the second half of 2011 and in second round price impacts that support higher [inflation] hovering at [5 percent] in the near," he said.

Trinidad said that, assuming that oil prices persist at $100-a-barrel or more in the near term and the peso weakens to about P44 to P45 to the dollar, Citigroup's forecast "Philippine inflation of 4.8 percent this year may rev up by late in the second quarter to easily in the third quarter."

Philippine inflation has "the potential for peaking at 6.5 percent to 7 percent later in the year," he said.

In an interview, Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the country has lower inflation scenario than neighboring countries like Indonesia or Singapore.

"We have the same world and yet we're better managing those things and we're going to continue to work so at least from the food standpoint, we will be more secure," Purisima said. "Maybe [we aren't] not self-sufficient but [we are] more [in food supply]."

Last week, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said inflation zoomed up to a nine-month high of 4.3 percent year-on-year in February, which was beyond the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' forecast range of 3 percent to 4.1 percent.

## MMDC shipping high grade nickel ore to China

By Ron T. Chichioco and Doris C. Dumlao

THE MINING unit of publicly-listed Metrocrown Holdings Inc. expects to ship out some 500,000 wet metric tons (WMT) of high grade nickel ore to China, Japan and other offshore markets this year.

MER disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that its unit, Mercrown Mining & Development Corp. (MMDC), could start shipping ore by June this year as the company had secured environmental clearance to construct a new causeway in the Municipality of Carmanal, Surigao del Sur, a key infrastructure needed to move ores to production.

The mining unit was granted an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) by the Environmental Management Bureau of the Caraga region, covering the construction of its causeway or elevated platform reaching in the waters.

"We know that we rushed to an important ruse mandated and we appreciate fully the importance of preserving the environment," MER president Ramon Bordo said. "This is why we want to focus our efforts on constructing to build MMDC as a responsible mining company, a big part of which is making sure that we fulfill our environmental obligations."

Half of the shipment expected by MMDC for this year had been committed to the Metro Group of Singapore, under a memorandum of agreement signed in December 2010. Shipment will start in June. The balance of this year's production is presently under negotiations with other parties.

MER assistant corporate secretary Ana Maria Ilarigbak said the local government unit in Carmanal had endorsed the project.

## DTI taps local governments in campaign vs profiteering

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has sought the help of local government units to ensure that no entry will abuse the current escalation in commodity prices and engage in profiteering.

In a letter dated Feb. 24, Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo asked all city and municipal mayors to order the regular updating of price billboards in wet markets. This will prevent vendors from jacking up prices on a whim.

Please focus wires on price billboards, he requested LGUs in set meetup.

Price tags in retail outlets and wet market stalls should also be regularly checked if these were compliant with government mandated suggested retail prices or at least within the current average prevailing prices for certain goods.

Also, LGUs should conduct regular inspections of weighing scales and should set up so-called Timbangan ng Bayan scales in wet markets.

Domingo sent the same letter of request to 120 city mayors and 1,511 municipal mayors all over the country, as they also served as heads of their respective Local Price Coordinating Council.

To help ensure proper pricing of basic necessities and prime commodities in wet markets and retail outlets nationwide, he also directed all DTI regional and provincial directors to coordinate with the local officials in their price monitoring efforts.

"We are mobilizing the department and coordinating with local government units to ensure that prices remain affordable and to prevent unscrupulous businessmen from taking advantage of the spikes in oil prices as a reason to jack up prices," he said in a statement issued yesterday.

He said in a Senate hearing Monday that the government was looking at imposing price controls only as a last resort.

# Ayala firms raising stake in investment company

## Sta. Lucia Land gets 12.9% stake in PRCI

PROPERTY DEVELOPER Sta. Lucia Land Inc. has acquired from its parent firm a 12.9% minority stake in Philippine Racing Club Inc. in based its asset base.

SLI disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its controlling unit Multibel, Sta. Lucia Realty & Development (SLRAD), had signed a deal to acquire all of its 73,883 common shares in PRCI, a horse racing operator with some real estate interests.

Under the deal, the shares will be turned over to SLI at P4.30 per share or a block price of P237.5 million.

The transfer of SLRAD's interest in PRCI will take some part of the latter's P1 billion obligation to SLI as of end-September 2010.

SLI is beefing up its asset base ahead of a planned P100 million to P150 million worth of shares through a follow-on equity offering slated for the end-3Q this year or early next year.

The property company was created in 2007 through the backdoor listing of selected property assets owned by its predecessor and parent firm SLRAD via Tipperah Realty Holdings.

Part of the strategy to maximize values within the Sta. Lucia group is for SLI to "cherry pick" from among its parent firm's other investments. Parent Sta. Lucia Realty also has 14 golf courses in its portfolio.

Getting a minority stake in PRCI is an attractive proposition for SLI, as the former will unlock values from its 25 hectare former racetrack in Makati via a property development venture with the Ayala group.

Doris C. Dumlao

## Giving up 50% interest in HK-based ARCH Capital

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AYALAS have agreed to give up a 50-percent stake to Hong Kong-based real estate investment management group ARCH Capital to exchange for a bigger interest in investment firm The Bahamy Group (TBG).

This was disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday by Ayala Corp. and its property unit, Ayala Land Inc.

TBG is an emerging market-focused private investment company with $5 billion worth of assets under management.

With the exchange, Ayala Corp.'s cornerstone investor in TBG since its launching in 2005, will increase its investment in TBG "to become one of its largest outside shareholders," the conglomerate said.

Ayala, however, did not say how much direct stake it would have in TBG.

TBG is expected to become the controlling stockholder of ARCH Capital after acquiring the Ayalas' 50-percent share in it.

The Ayalas' stake in ARCH Capital group was worth about $32 million as of January.

The Ayalas, thus, gave up in favor of TBG its shares in ARCH Capital Management Co., Ltd. and ARCH Capital Asian Partners G.P.

ARCH Capital Management is a Hong Kong SFC-licensed asset management company. ARCH Capital Asian Partners is a Cayman Islands-registered company. They are the investment manager and general partner, respectively, of ARCH Capital Asian Partners L.P., a $550-million Asia ex-Japan real estate fund which has projects in China, Shanna, Singapore, Thailand and India.

"We believe this is a natural progression for ARCH which has been a flexible and exciting investments for us. At this stage in its new growth cycle, we feel it would be better served and managed within a globally dedicated alternative asset management firm," Ayala chief executive officer Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala said.

"Given Ayala's successful experience as an investor in TBG for a significant period of time, we believe TBG would be an ideal partner in creating ARCH's continued success. It would also allow us to consolidate our investments in this particular industry group," Zobel de Ayala said.

For the Ayala group, the deal gives it a broader exposure to TBG, which plans to grow its business in Asia. TBG has presence in New York, Singapore, Hong Kong, London, Moscow, Dubai, Lima, Montevideo and Johannesburg.

EH LAND Commercial Properties president Henry Sy Jr. (center) leads the topping off ceremonies for Two E-commerce, the second of the four buildings planned for BPOs in the Mall of Asia Complex. With Sy are (from left) from Zobel's eGIC: David Critchley of Arquitectonica; EH Land SVP David Rebuck; Felix Lerrel TDLA Associates; Roberto Jose Castillo, president of EEI Corp., and EH Land senior vice president Lee Hong Kong.

## RLC, Federal tie up for condo project

THOMAS JOHN Gokongwei and George Ty are teaming up in a real estate venture for the first time, with their respective property companies jointly embarking on a two-tower residential condominium development on Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City.

The joint venture project, called Solo Residences, will be developed by RLC on a 21,189-square-meter lot owned by the Tys' Federal Land. The announcement was made by RLC, which will also market the project, targeting middle-income end-users, particularly young professionals and start-up families.

The first tower will be an all-deluxe unit development—with an option to purchase units—consisting of 41 floors (including three podium levels for parking) with 914 residential units available for sale. Construction will start on March 2012 and is targeted for completion by March 2014.

Deluxe units have areas ranging from 25 to 27 square meters and will be sold at an average price of P1.9 million to P2.2 million per unit, or about P85,000 per square meter.

"It's an ideal development for those who have high consideration for mobility and for those in search of dwelling units that strike a balance between quality and affordability," said Robert Rai, vice president of sales and marketing of Robinsons Communities.

"Solo Residences is located in a prime area, offers attractive payment terms and makes it easy for residents to move to-due to its ideal unit deliverables," said Christopher Sarcino of Robinsons Communities.

With monthly amortization payments for the 48 down payments as low as about P35,000 per sq.m., Solo Residences is one of the few priced projects in the area, the RLC statement said.

The residential development is located near the Robinsons Cyberspace Complex, Robinsons Forum (Pioneer) Mall and Robinsons Gateway.

Its location, which is a few minutes from Metro Manila's main thoroughfare Edsa, is accessible to all the major business districts of Ortigas, Makati, and The Fort premier business hub (street view going to and from office).

Doris C. Dumlao



## DISCLOSURES

**FIRST Philippine Holdings Corp.** said it bought back 200,000 of its shares at P93.26 per share on March 3, in line with the company's share buyback program.

* * *

**RRCPHREIT Corp.** disclosed that it bought back 48,000 of its shares at P3.78 per share on March 3, in line with the company's share buyback program.

* * *

**ABACUS Consolidated Resources and Holdings Inc.** disclosed on March 3 the resignation of Dante T. Zarraga as director and member of the company's audit committee. It also announced the election of Cindy B. Cayanan as Zarraga's replacement.

* * *

**ALPHALAND Corp.** disclosed the resignation of Noel C. Flaig-dangana as chief finance officer, and the appointment of Marlene H. Yao as his replacement, effective March 16.

* * *

**FIRST Philippine Holdings Corp.** had announced the election of Francis Giles B. Puno as a director and member of the finance and investment committee.

* * *

**MBC Allied Inc.** disclosed the resignation of Marlene V. Devera as company chief controller, and the appointment of Benjamin M. Rivera as his replacement.

* * *

**A. SORIANO Corp.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 13 at 10 a.m. at the Manila Peninsula Hotel, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 16 will be entitled to vote at the said meeting.

* * *

**CHIBB Banking Corp.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 3 at 4 p.m. at the China Bank Building, Penthouse, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 23 are entitled to notice of and vote at the said meeting.

* * *

**ABOITIZ Power Corp.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 16 at 11 a.m. at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Singalong Dominic Boulevard, Cebu City. Stockholders of record as of March 31 are entitled to notice of the said meeting.

* * *

**ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 16 at 4 p.m. at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Singalong Dominic Boulevard, Cebu City. Stockholders of record as of March 31 are entitled to notice of the said meeting.

* * *

**BANKO Cia Rio Uchibashi Inc.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 17. Stockholders of record as of April 4 are entitled to notice of and vote at the said meeting.

* * *

**METRO Pacific Investments Corp.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 23. The record date for the said meeting is on April 25.

Compiled by Marieto Madrio, Inquirer Research

## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of March 8, 2011

## CURRENCIES

| March 8, 2011 Country | Unit | Cash Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 1 | 1.000000 | 43.8670 |
| Japan | Yen | 1 | 0.012016 | 0.5271 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1 | 1.604000 | 70.3717 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 1 | 1.078000 | 47.3017 |
| Netherlands | Euro | 1 | 1.382000 | 60.6501 |
| Canada | Dollar | 1 | 0.991000 | 43.4842 |
| Australia | Dollar | 1 | 1.011000 | 44.3622 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 1 | 0.801000 | 35.1481 |
| Sweden | Krona | 1 | 0.154000 | 6.7571 |
| Denmark | Krone | 1 | 0.185000 | 8.1174 |
| Norway | Krone | 1 | 0.175000 | 7.6777 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 1 | 0.266000 | 11.6702 |
| Kuwait | Dinar | 1 | 3.565000 | 156.4355 |
| Bahrain | Dinar | 1 | 2.653000 | 116.4060 |
| United Arab Emirates | Dirham | 1 | 0.272000 | 11.9342 |
| Qatar | Riyal | 1 | 0.275000 | 12.0656 |
| Taiwan | Dollar | 1 | 0.034000 | 1.4918 |
| China | Yuan | 1 | 0.152000 | 6.6687 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 1 | 0.129000 | 5.6601 |
| India | Rupee | 1 | 0.022000 | 0.9653 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 1 | 1.078000 | 47.3017 |
| Turkey | Lira | 1 | 0.611000 | 26.8116 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 1 | 0.326000 | 14.3076 |
| South Korea | Won | 1 | 0.000900 | 0.0395 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 1 | 0.000110 | 0.0048 |
| Thailand | Baht | 1 | 0.033000 | 1.4481 |

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) data. Effective 1 January 2006, the BSP shall publish the Philippine peso exchange rates of the Philippine peso against the US dollar, Japanese yen, British pound, Swiss franc, Dutch euro, Canadian dollar, Australian dollar, Singapore dollar, Swedish krona, Danish krone, Norwegian krone, Saudi Arabian riyal, Kuwaiti dinar, Bahraini dinar, United Arab Emirates dirham, Qatari riyal, Taiwanese dollar, Chinese yuan, Hong Kong dollar, Indian rupee, Swiss franc, Turkish lira, Malaysian ringgit, South Korean won, Indonesian rupiah, Thai baht, Mexican peso, Brazilian real, Russian ruble, Czech koruna, Hungarian forint, Polish zloty, Romanian leu, Israeli shekel, Chilean peso, Slovak koruna, Slovenian tolar, Estonian kroon, Latvian lat, Lithuanian litas, Bulgarian lev, Croatian kuna, Serbian dinar, Icelandic krona, New Zealand dollar, South African rand, Colombian peso, Peruvian nuevo sol, Argentine peso, Ukrainian hryvnia, Kazakhstani tenge, Moroccan dirham, Tunisian dinar, Vietnamese dong, Algerian dinar, Libyan dinar, Jordanian dinar, Lebanese pound, Egyptian pound, Omani rial, Iranian rial, Mauritian rupee, Slovak koruna, Slovenian tolar, Estonian kroon, Latvian lat, Lithuanian litas, Bulgarian lev, Croatian kuna, Serbian dinar, Icelandic krona, New Zealand dollar, South African rand, Colombian peso, Peruvian nuevo sol, Argentine peso, Ukrainian hryvnia, Kazakhstani tenge, Moroccan dirham, Tunisian dinar, Vietnamese dong, Algerian dinar, Libyan dinar, Jordanian dinar, Lebanese pound, Egyptian pound, Omani rial, Iranian rial, Mauritian rupee.

# Greece slams rating agencies after Moody's cut

LONDON—Greece has launched a tirade against US credit ratings agencies after Moody's downgraded its debt grade further below junk status, saying they have overreacted and its country might have to debt-swap its massive borrowings.

The agency dashed its rating by three notches to B1 from Ba1 and warned it may cut it again if the government's commitment to reducing massive budget deficits does not become less willing to support it....Greece was saved from bankruptcy last May after accepting a 110-billion-euro ($150 billion) bailout from the EU and the International Monetary Fund.

The Greek government's response Monday was quick and critical. It said Moody's downgrade was "completely unjustified" and "does not reflect an objective and balanced assessment" of Greece's actual economic prospects.

Ultimately, Moody's downgrading of Greece's debt reveals more about the misaligned incentives and the lack of accountability of credit rating agencies than the genuine state or prospects of the Greek economy," the finance ministry said.

It said the agencies...credit-handicapped by their's and Fitch Ratings have also downgraded Greece heavily in past months—were trying to make up for failing to predict the 2008 global financial crisis.

"Having completely missed the boat in the run-up to the global financial crisis in 2008, the rating agencies are now competing with each other to be the first to identify risks that will lead to the next crisis," the ministry said.

In explaining its downgrade, Moody's warned that the Greek government's economic program may not yield the intended drop in debt and return to growth, and noted Greece's considerable skill, rather in raising revenues. It also highlighted the risk of tougher debt conditions when the EU-IMF bailout package ends in 2013.

"The risk of a post 2013 continuing ratings lead the Greek authorities to pursue a painful path in a voluntary distressed exchange before that time," Moody's Investors Services said.

The Greek finance ministry ignored the timing and the size of the downgrade, describing them as "unacceptable" to the wider aim of the government's success in cutting its budget deficit by 6 percentage points to 2010's around 9 percent of the country's national income. The government has also pledged to bring the deficit to the EU limit of 3 percent by 2014.

Despite the progress, Greek national debt is still expected to exceed 150 percent of GDP this year, and the economy is forecast to contract 3 percent.

The finance ministry said the reduction in the budget deficit was the "strongest evidence that exists to see how the risk of sovereign default has not increased but rather decreased as Greece is on a bold path toward fiscal consolidation."

It said Moody's failed to properly take into account the positive impact from the austerity measures and structural reforms.

"It is a time when the global economy is fragile and market sentiment is sensitive, unbalanced and unjustified rating decisions such as Moody's today can cause serious damage, self-fulfilling prophecies and seriously strengthen the arguments for tighter regulation of the rating agencies themselves," it added.

Credit ratings agencies have been blamed for failing to properly identify risky trends in the global economy ahead of the financial crisis, which led to the deepest recession since World War II and a crisis of confidence in blamed governments it, among, particularly in Europe. AP

# Arab turmoil, Dubai glut are risk to UAE economic recovery

WASHINGTON—Turbulence across the Arab world and Dubai's ongoing property glut pose risks to the United Arab Emirates' economic recovery, the International Monetary Fund said Monday.

The oil-rich Gulf federation also needs to draw up its powerful governments backed firms that were at the center of its boom and bust through restrictions of their finances and investments, the IMF said.

After being hit hard, especially in Dubai, by the 2008-2009 financial shock, the UAE economy should grow by 3.2% percent in 2011, with a good pickup in the non-oil sector, the Washington-based institution said in a mission report.

"The economic recovery is gaining strength, supported by a favorable global environment but subject to increased regional uncertainty," it said.

"Risks to the recovery remain, including from possible economic spillovers of regional events...The recent supply of property in Dubai and the uncertainty regarding its size will continue to weigh on growth," the IMF warned that the current unrelenting turbulence in the Arab world and sovereign debt risk in some other in the region could bring "more challenging market conditions" which could impact businesses, including state firms, known as GREs, which it said had "substantial" debt rollover requirements.

The UAE's four neighbors Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Yemen and Oman have all experienced political turbulence or unrest in the in the past month.

UAE banks...the heart of a growing regional financial center...were resilient, although its capital support mainly from the government. But the IMF pointed out that non performing loans have doubled since the U.S. financial crisis broke.

The central bank "should maintain its ensure that banks provisions adequately, particularly in light of increasing provisioning needs on Dubai GREs," it said.

The IMF also said that more attention is needed to be focused on GRE-related risks.

"Ongoing efforts at restructuring experience and increased borrowings of GREs in other countries call for monitoring the risks posed by these entities more closely." Dubai's state-controlled sovereign's were at the center of that country's property boom and bust, forcing Dubai to obtain a $20 billion bailout from state-owned Abu Dhabi. AFP

# Brent crude drops below $114 as oil cartel mulls output boost

YIN JOIN gestures at each other while working in the trade oil and natural gas options pit on the floor of the New York Mercantile Exchange March 7, 2011.

SINGAPORE—Brent crude fell more than $1 on Tuesday to below $114 after Kuwait's oil minister said Opec is in talks to boost production for the first time in more than two years, soothing markets rattled by the Middle East unrest.

An official output increase by Opec would signal the group's determination to put a cap on prices and keep the global economic recovery on track after revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt and protests from Morocco to Oman sent Brent crude to almost $120 a barrel last month, the highest since 2008. A looming civil war in Libya has added as much two-thirds as of the country's oil output, or 1 million barrels per day (bpd), shaving cash from economies for Opec to boost production. "We are in consultations about a potential output increase," Sheikh Ahmad al-Abdullah al-Sabah told reporters, adding that there was no decision for the group to produce new quotas yet.

Brent crude for April fell $1.20 to $113.75 a barrel, down more than $6 from a Feb. 24 peak of $119.79, the highest price since 2008, when it reached a record $147.50. "There's no doubt the market is concerned about supply at the moment and any statements on a possible output would be a trigger for profit-taking," said Mark Pervan, head of commodities research at ANZ in Melbourne. "I would still say the market is fairly balanced and the cartel won't trigger a lot of selling in the near term," he said. Saudi Arabia, the largest Opec exporter and home to most of the spare capacity held by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, is pumping about 9 million barrels a day, about 1 million bpd above its quota.

US crude closed down $0.85 on Monday to its lowest since September 2010. On Tuesday it was down $1.29 at $100.15. Concern has prevailed that Libya's supply disruptions may spread to other countries in the region amid the Libyan turmoil. But so far oil is flowing as usual from the world's biggest producers in the Mideast Gulf.

"The massive spike that we've seen in the price of oil has literally been driven by the geopolitical concerns. As soon as those fears in speculative markets are removed from the market, I expect to see a sharp drop in crude prices to below $100 and traders to focus on fundamentals again," said Matthew Sevey, an analyst at CMC Markets in Sydney. Reuters

# Emerging markets overheating, says IMF

WASHINGTON—Fast growing emerging market economies are beginning to exhibit signs of overheating, a top International Monetary Fund official said on Monday.

Many emerging markets, including China, have struggled to contain inflation and control the heavy flow of investment money into their economies. Although the IMF has been warning for the months of the risks of price pressure, the comments by IMF First Deputy Managing Director John Lipsky suggested the Fund was growing increasingly concerned.

"For the emerging economies, growing at 6.5 to 7 percent, the emergence of excess capacity has been largely used up, and as a result we're starting to see more significant signs of overheating," Lipsky told Reuters Insider in an interview.

Rising oil prices has compounded the inflation problem, but Lipsky said the IMF has not yet its growth forecast because it thinks the oil price spike will prove temporary.

He said until unrest spread to oil producing Libya, much of the rises in oil prices in 2010 and early 2011 reflected an improved economic outlook. However, the latest worries about supply disruptions created a "feat factor" that drove oil above $100 a barrel, and if sustained that factor could pose a bigger threat to growth.

Rising food prices also posed a threat, particularly to lower income countries where food takes up a larger percentage of household budgets. High food prices were one of many reasons related. The recent upheaval in Egypt and Tunisia.

"We have to be concerned even in places where there is no political upheaval," Lipsky said. "The social unrest and real difficulties for poor households in many economies is something that has to be attended to." Reuters

# China official junks 'double-dip' scenario

SHANGHAI—China's economy is safe from a "double-dip" slowdown in growth, a top economic planner said Tuesday, though he acknowledged challenges in keeping inflation under control and creating bank on excessive and wasteful investments.

"First of all, you can say for sure that the Chinese economy will not double dip," Li Pumin, a spokesman for the National Development and Reform Commission, said in an online conference geared on the main government websites.

Li pointed to the gradual world economic recovery and China's own strong potential as factors supporting stable expansion after the 10.3 percent growth last year that displaced Japan as the world's second largest economy.

China's economy slowed only briefly during the global financial crisis, as massive government stimulus spending helped counter the impact of plunging exports. But that same spending, along with surging food prices, is now seen as a factor behind inflation that hit a 28-month high in February and remains above the government's target of 4 percent.

More growth, price stability a Beijing's top priority, Li said.

Apart from ensuring adequate and efficient, by distributed food supplies, the government needs to "moderately control high and excess capacity and investments, wasteful construction and to improve the quality and efficiency of investments," he said.

In the longer term, Chinese seeking to cultivate its reliance on exports as a driver of economic growth by increasing domestic consumer demand. The government's 2011 economic blueprint calls for nurturing self-sustaining growth by promoting consumer spending.

That could help ease tensions with Washington and other trading partners that complain about currency controls and import barriers that they say unfairly favor China's multibillion-dollar trade surplus.

But that goal will remain elusive, some economists say, as long as many Chinese industries, whose overcapacity has been supported by cheap credit and other government policies, continue to produce far more goods than the country can consume.

Speaking Monday on the sidelines of the annual session of China's legislature, Commerce Minister Chen Deming said Beijing would try to streamline import procedures as part of its efforts to tone the trade surplus, which fell to $190 billion last year from $196 billion in 2009. AP

# Toyota's global sales of hybrid cars top 3M

TOKYO—Toyota Motor Corp. said Tuesday that global sales of its hybrid models have topped 3 million vehicles on the back of brisk demand for the Prius.

The world's No. 1 automaker has sold more than 3.03 million gasoline-electric hybrid vehicles worldwide since 1997 when Prius first rolled out the Prius in Japan, it said.

The Prius, the world's first mass-produced hybrid car, alone accounts for 72 percent of Toyota's global hybrid car sales.

Last year Toyota sold 7.32 million vehicles worldwide and 890,000 of those were hybrids.

Over 60 percent of Toyota's hybrid sales come from abroad with the rest in Japan, its North American, Toyota's hybrid sales have surged to 1.11 million vehicles from just 5,700 in 2000.

Toyota's hybrid sales far outnumbered those by rivals. Honda Motor Co. said it has sold around 650,000 hybrid cars worldwide. Nissan Motor Co., which began hybrid vehicle sales in Japan last year, said domestic hybrid sales totaled 1,000 vehicles as of February 2011.

Nissan launched sales of hybrid vehicles in North America in 2007. AP

# Gold steadies below record amid ME jitters

SINGAPORE—Gold held steady on Tuesday below a record high hit in the previous session, while a rebound in ETF holdings suggested that investors and money managers fond of precious and related assets in North Africa and the Middle East.

One of Libya's leader Muammar Gaddafi's sons, Saadi, said his father had not yet thrown his army into full battle against rebels, saying it is ready to defend Libya against foreign attack, and civil war could erupt if he fell. But some Arab newspapers and al-Jazeera television said Gaddafi was looking for an agreement allowing him to step down. Spot gold hardly moved, standing at $1,439.35 an ounce, having rallied as high as $1,444.40 an ounce on Monday, a record high, as violence flared in Libya and after the downgrade of Greece's credit rating targeted worries about eurozone sovereign debt.

"If massive people are fleeing at the same end, I think there's not much room to go on the downside. If may fall by $10 or so, and then people will buy back," said Ronald Leung, director of Jen Cheong Gold Dealers in Hong Kong. "People are still bullish on a short and medium term."

The world's largest gold-backed exchange-traded fund's SPDR Gold Trust...said its holdings edged up to 1,217.205 tons by March 7 from 1,219.502 tons on March 3, which was a 9-1/2 month low. Some crude fell below $115 on Tuesday on the reports that Gaddafi was looking for a way to step down and end the fighting that has choked the nation's exports, and to unrest were also stoked by Opec statements of supplying to the market.

US gold futures for April fell $5.1 on comex to $1,440.1 a troy ounce after striking a record at $1,445.70 on Monday.

Bargain hunting helped gold defy pressure from a correction in oil prices, although there were also concerns inflation could prompt investors to raise interest rates, which could eventually curb demand for non-yielding bullion.

"Gold is still quite buoyant despite the physical sale but there's nothing great so far," said a dealer in Singapore. "There's a small volume of scrap report from Indonesia, and premiums for gold bars remain at $3."

Premiums in Hong Kong were steady at $1 over $1,439.6 the spot London price. Reuters

# BUSINESS

## BSP may no longer hold off rate hike

By Michelle V. Remo

SUSTAINING REAL interest rates in the Philippines may prompt the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to finally raise key policy rates when its Monetary Board meets on March 24.

Real interest rate, which affects actual returns generated from savings or investments, is computed as the nominal interest rate less inflation. Since a drop in real interest rate suggests a decline in earnings from savings or investments, it tends to encourage people to spend more.

Inflationary pressures stemming from declining real interest rates could be the factor that would force the BSP to tighten its monetary policy regulators said.

The country's key policy rates stand at record lows of 4 and 6 percent for overnight borrowing and lending, respectively. These rates have been in place since July 2009.

"Real interest rates are still positive, but are falling. [Whether real interest rates] are or are still sufficient to maintain macroeconomic stability is something we [monetary officials] will be addressing in the March 24 Monetary Board meeting," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

"Monetary policy will really have to be reviewed in light of all these increases in commodity prices."

Real interest rates in the country have declined following the increase in inflation reported last February.

The National Statistics Office last week said that annual inflation eased to 4.1 percent in February, accelerating from 3.6 percent in January.

Also, the latest inflation figure exceeded the BSP's forecast for the month, ranging between 2 and 4.1 percent.

Economists attributed the faster rate of rise in consumer prices to the demand- and supply-side factors. They said that rising income, resulting from economic recovery, have strengthened demand for goods and services. On the other, rising costs of imported goods, such as oil and selected food products, are pushing overall domestic prices.

The BSP gradually had to bring down key policy rates because of the global economic crisis that peaked in 2008.

Officials said low interest rates were needed to boost consumption and investments. The move allowed the economy to stay afloat.

Other central banks in the region had done the same. But following the global economic recovery in 2010, foreign central banks had since begun raising their respective key policy rates.

Earlier this year, the BSP said that there was no immediate need for it to tighten the country's monetary policy because inflation in the Philippines seemed manageable unlike that experienced in other countries.

This time, however, central bank officials have admitted that there is a need to review the existing policy rates and consider a tighter monetary policy.

Some economists expect the BSP to start raising its key rates when its Monetary Board sits down during its next policy convening meeting on March 24.

## *Conserve fuel, DOE urges public*

By Amy R. Remo

AS GLOBAL oil prices continue to soar, the Department of Energy is urging the public to do its share in conserving fuel, saying this will not only help cut the country's costly oil imports, but will also cushion consumers for everyone.

Such conservation measures are being advocated by the DOE as threats of possible supply disruptions loom given the incessant unrest in some oil producing countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

To further stress the need for fuel conservation, the DOE said it should be noted that global oil prices were already trading at $105 per barrel and then analysts are on signs of surges, unless the tensions overseas were allayed.

Since the Philippines imports most of its fuel requirements, price movements in the international market are proportionately reflected on local pump prices. And because the Philippines has a deregulated oil industry, the government cannot intervene and control prices, unless a national emergency will be declared by the President.

"Everyone is affected by the oil supply situation and the ever soaring prices of petroleum products but we can take proactive steps to counter this," the DOE said.

The DOE has suggested the following measures to help conserve fuel:

★ For one, car owners may choose to go carpooling with family and friends when going to work or school. Doing this even just once a week may result in savings of as much as P528 every month.

★ Always ensure that your tires have the correct gauge pressure. This can help save 10 percent on your daily gas consumption. By doing so, vehicle owners may be able to save as much as P1461 every month.

★ Organize errands by time, location or importance each day. Every kilometer off a trip may save a motorist at least 9%.

★ Avoid "idling" or keeping engines running while parked for a long period. Two liters of fuel are wasted for each hour of idling, so motorists should be best to turn off your engines if you expect to wait for more than three minutes.

★ Avoid revving up your engines and sudden accelerations, as this would help save on fuel. Driving at a steady speed of only 80 kilometers will go a very low consumed.

## ONB plans to acquire rural banks in Visayas

By Michelle V. Remo

ONE NETWORK Bank (ONB), one of the top rural banks in the country and the biggest in Mindanao, intends to acquire small- to industry players in the Visayas to establish its presence in more promising areas outside Mindanao.

ONB had initially planned to expand in the Visayas via the establishment of its own branches. Now, according to its president, the bank is considering acquiring one or more existing rural banks in the area.

At present, ONB's 80 branches and 104 automated teller machines are all in Mindanao.

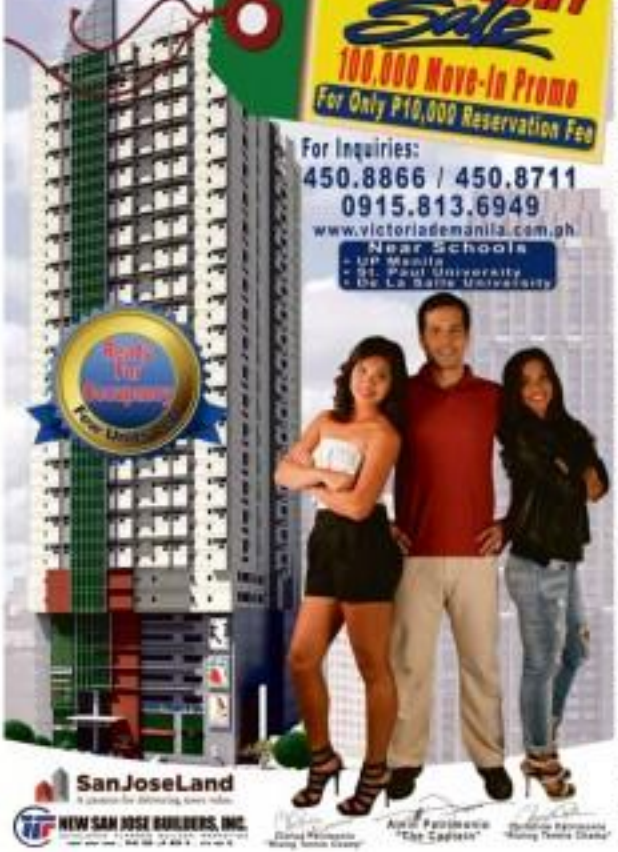
Alex Bonnevierres, president of ONB, said in an interview with the Inquirer that the plan to acquire banks in the Visayas was partly inspired by the incentives being offered by regulators to banks that would acquire smaller members of the industry.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. recently implemented programs—the Strengthening Program for Rural Banks—providing, among others, regulatory relief and bonus to banks that will acquire banks with low capitalization.

Bonnevierres said he met recently with representatives from a group of rural banks in the Visayas and discussed with them the prospects of consolidation.

He said some rural banks in the Visayas had expressed interest in consolidating because they have financial instruments that could better serve the financial services needs of clients from rural areas.

"Through consolidation, rural banks will be able to generate bigger capital that is necessary to deliver comprehensive services to clients. Consolidation will help rural banks better compete with commercial banks," Bonnevierres said.



## Gov't still considering MVP proposal for MRT

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE GOVERNMENT is not throwing out businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan's (MVP) P1-bil proposal to acquire the state's holdings in Metro Rail Transit (MRT), despite the train line's indenture as the lot of infrastructure projects to be put up for bidding.

Transportation Undersecretary Glenn Sacdalan said the proposal of Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) and the Ayala-led other groups would be deliberated at the same time.

"We will have a parallel run," he said in an earlier interview.

"We will not say which scheme will be best for the government," he added.

The MRT capacity expansion is one of the five infrastructure projects that the government wants to bid out to companies under the public-private partnership (PPP) framework.

MPIC has proposed to buy the government's minority stake in the MRT train line and to pay all of the system's foreign debt amounting to $1.1 billion.

MPIC, which is chaired by Pangilinan, also offered to spend $400 million to double the train system's 13 stations to 25 and promises a day to minimize congestion.

Conglomerates Ayala Corp. and San Miguel Corp. have also expressed interest in bidding for the contract to operate the MRT line, which spans 17 kilometers from Quezon City to Baclaran, Metro Manila's major thoroughfare.

"Please be advised that Ayala Corp. has expressed interest to explore various opportunities in the infrastructure sector... the MRT is [by] far the biggest project that the company is currently looking into," the country's oldest conglomerate said in a disclosure on Tuesday.

Sirot said the government would discuss the proposal that would also involve the expansion of MRT's capacity upgrade the busine.

"The main criterion for the government is what will be the best for the riding public," he said.

## PPP Center gets ₱300M

By Rica T. Gichoxon

THE GOVERNMENT has released P300 million for its public-private partnership (PPP) program fund.

The move is seen to pave the way for the inflow of commercial funding from multilateral agencies.

Already, five major transport-push projects are up for bidding. Also, two programs for the health sector are being prepared by the Department of Health for development, according to Philanson Tiaco, executive director of the newly established PPP Center.

Tiaco told reporters that the DOH was proposing a project to develop the 5-in-1 vaccine procurement and to modernize a number of public hospitals in the Philippines.

He said this on the sidelines of the Experience Sharing and Workshop on Public-Private Partnerships in Makati City.

The Senate Embassy and the DC Banks and International led the workshop, which was co-organized by Cedo Bed and Go Ca Lan Roley Institute.

The pentavalent vaccine combines five different vaccines in one injection to protect against five diseases: Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus and Hepatitis B. According to studies, children immunized with the 5-in-1 vaccine do not need additional examination for the Diphtheria vaccine or the Hepatitis B vaccine.

Tiaco said the PPP project director of International Infrastructure UK, said social infrastructure such as hospitals and schools have been successfully implemented using PPP in the UK, for example. PPP have been used to upgrade such facilities, he said.

The PPP program is seen to be the cornerstone of the Aquino administration's medium-term strategy for economic growth that is expected to stimulate private and distribute wealth more evenly among Filipinos.

"The Philippine government has already set aside P900 million for the Project Development and Monitoring Facility. This was the size stated in EO 8 [Executive Order 8, signed in 2010]," Tiaco said in a phone interview.

Editor Joey R. Arcenas

MOTORIN

# March is their month

## Women hold the wheel

LADY BOSSES ALL From left, Fe Agustin of Hyundai, Maricar Perez of BMW, Gina Domingo of Kia and Elizabeth Lee of JDAC

By Tessa R. Salazar

FLESH AND METAL. Skin and leather. Skinny models in skimpy clothes straddling testosterone-driven steel machines. Women, and their perceived fragility and sexuality, have for many years been throughout the decades provided the perfect complement to "man-made" automobiles.

But times are changing. Though we may still see those sexy models posing on cars which may besides those shows, an increasing number of the fairer sex can be seen either inside the automobiles (sensing rings around their male counterparts) or inside the corporate cockpits—your "universal—sliding file clerk."

Going instead of selling the car by being a mere bring, brandishing instruments, they buy the car, drive it, and in the process greatly influence how the brand would subsequently be marketed. The transformation has been a slow, painstaking process. And up to now, the "feminine mould" remains an object of influence in the automotive industry is still limited in comparison with that of their male counterparts. Elizabeth (Elizabeth Hughes of Perkins Autos recently quoted Lorraine Schuler (who founded the Women's Automotive Association International in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan) as saying "It (the automotive industry) is a tough one for women to crack." Hughes also quoted Nicole Nelson, outgoing administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, as saying that in the last four years of marriage, only a few CEOs of the automotive industry, the other found herself asking, "Where are the women?"

Here in the Philippines, where women play increasingly dominant roles in society, politics and business, the auto industry remains a bastion of male top-level leaders, namely Elizabeth H. Lee, Fe Perez-Agudo, Gina Domingo and Maricar Crandall Inasmuch as the brains behind Universal Motors Corp./Nissan, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc., Kia and BMW, respectively.

Among them, the most prominent would unarguably be Lee, who, aside from being the CEO of UMC, has also been the president of the influential Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Camp) for several years.

Her achievements in the industry have been recognized by both private entities and the government, having earned the International EXP award by Nissan Global CEO Carlos Ghosn for three straight years (2002 to 2004), representing the Philippines, the only country representing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) at that time, and being one of The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) in 2007 given by the President of the Philippines particularly for Camp's campaign against smuggled vehicles.

Her TOWNS award also cited her marketing idea for UMC "To You, To Everyone" program as it helped underprivileged Filipinos start their own micro-businesses, thereby helping 3,700 families and creating 4,000 direct jobs.

Lee graduated with an MBA from the United States, and previously worked in JOG/Arthur Andersen's Financing Consulting Group and Merrill Lynch's Private Client Group in California.

She is also the vice chair of the Philippine Automotive Federation Inc. (PAI), the vice president of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), board member of several industries, and a council member of the Asian Automotive Federation. She is also vice president of the Women's Group of the Philippine Constitutional Association (Philcontsa).

Lee relates to Success Monering that last year, Nissan had launched new models, including the Navara 231 and the high-end luxury SUV Nissan Patrol Royale. Dat "Si You, Di Everyone" continues, she said, with an even wider range of units available to cater to all family and business needs. And in terms of specifications, The Nissan Sport Utility Truck remains the "top dog."

"Investments are in the business, with automakers still remembering the Philippines as a viable and strategic location to expand their operations particularly in the CEO operations. We must support this effort to create jobs and engage investors to bank on the Philippines," she stressed. "And considering that the auto market of the future is in Asia, we must exploit the fact that we are right smack in the middle of it."

### True humor, non-negotiables

Lee quotes John Maxwell as her philosophy. "The greatest honor is the respect people have for you.... and that people will follow you because of who you are and who you represent on a daily basis'. It does remind us that true

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# How PNoy's team can make it better for motorists

FASHIONISTA On the motoring industry is quite happy right now. sales-wise after selling 172,000 plus cars last year, business are flying, events are outstanding and for the consumer, presence and discourse are just unbelievably good.

I was in luxury car dealerships stop waiting for my ride after returning a test unit, and some of the big names were discussing sales figures and prices, trying to figure out how to cut off and not maneuver their key brands' bottom line. The sedans, SUV and sports car segments. Definitely a late godless indeed, instead of worrying about how they will sell cars languishing in the dealership showrooms.

But before we all get Hybrid and drink ourselves drunk with success, glory, bonuses and what not, let's look at some key issues the industry and the government needs to address.

Safety and security. The government needs to 'heal' up their safety and security in all public places to deter our theft and would be car thieves. I know of a handful of highly suspected car thieves, with a wide variety of cars changing cars parked right outside their houses in upscale villages and subdivisions and which keep changing regularly. How can criminals like these keep going around, flamboyantly displaying their ill-gotten wealth? We must be like Egypt, where crocodiles are stored their dead bodies. Like Egypt, the masses will eventually run out of patience for these sacred crocodiles.

Proper taxation of all imported vehicles. Right now, based on various conversations with participants in the motoring industry, the Bureau of Customs seems like it is filled not just crooks, but idiots as well. The BOC knows their import tax rates on the Harley Blue Book or other similar third party non-government or even non-industry, grossly underestimate the value of goods coming in, thus lowering the taxes they should be taxed to suffer? We can see this for cars now based on 2008 values, grey market importers, but certainly not with a proper established importer. If luxury cars from the US and Europe were taxed the way they should be taxed, which is based on increased amounts issued by the factory or the manufacturers directly rather than relying on a cheap CIF/CIS or DR/CD forms, my assumption is that the local SRP of those vehicles will deeply fly 20 percent to 30 percent. That means Armed Customs Team must run effective and legitimate "Red" carts. We see the other hand, a car owner who buys a car from a dealership has to wait almost half a year for plates and registration stickers. Why is the government allowing a car owner to drive around without plates and registration stickers. Why is the government allowing a car owner to run on the Pulso toll? users or MMDA guys mine they are simply enforcing the law. The problem is with the LTO and obviously inefficient system. I give them the benefit of the doubt that they are trying their best, but really, as Sean Connery said in the movie The Rock, knows white about giving their best. You can give your best but if you fail repeatedly you should step down as an administrator in depending on you, where your best simply isn't good enough.

Last but not least, to the manufacturers. Please, stop selling us garbage. We know what's on the other side of the world, we know what cars they drive. And we know some grey-import motorists are in our local shows. Bring us better, faster, safer cars. Bring us more bodystyling cars, more desirable cars. Bring us truly global cars. P Noy driving a Porsche, despite what critics say, to I believe a passionate start to us all driving better cars. Look at the UK. The current Prime Minister, David Cameron, purportedly drives a Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano so they all have cars, interesting cars to drive in of Wigley.



SKID MARKS

*Butchi Santos*

# March is their month

From page B3-1

honor is neither based on, nor ensured through, wealth or power."

She added: "My guiding principles in life are, in all things, do what is right. Only then can one be a blessing to others and truly enjoy God's blessings in return. Integrity is non-negotiable; and everything is possible. Don't worry, don't be afraid, just do it."

Yulo believes that everyone makes a difference. Successful people seldom think to do so. They are exerted there."

Lee would wish to be remembered as someone who tried her best to accomplish what is most relevant for the future growth of the industry, remembering not only the businesses, but more importantly, the workers and families who depend on them.

## Iron lady

"Do you want to be a tiger in a small bog, dead on just one of the mountain in a big forest?" This was what Evelyn Agudo's father Emilio Perez told her before he passed away more than a decade ago. Then, he was about to give up a fruitful career to end everyone to join Hyundai, an erstwhile unknown but very automotive brand. With her father's last words, Evelyn Agudo decided in her mind. So, joined the automotive industry in 2001.

Almost immediately, she was faced with two seemingly insurmountable odds, both buried since her by public perception. That she joined a weak Korean brand, and that she was a woman in the workplace.

This was how Dr Peter Agudo, the president and CEO of Hari and current president of the Alliance of Vehicle Importers and Distributors (AVID), related to become Motoring the Hanh Legislatings of her corporate career in the auto industry.

He told that how because Motoring has thought one of the turning points in her career happened in South Korea just as she was starting out with Hari. When she was first introduced to the top management of Hyundai, one of the big bosses there asked her, "What do you know about cars?"

"It was a question that would probably send most crumbling back to the Philippines, but as I stood my ground, I looked him in the eye and replied, in a very business-like tone, "What do you know about the Philippine market?" Since then, I've been able to study my territory. I was representing the Philippines after all, a country my known to have many heroes who do not flinch in front of crocodiles and money," she said.

"Honestly also, I had undergone my last car experience of humiliation, which I would say elaborate during this interview, except to say that I was the only girl in a meeting up again of car dog-eat-dog world. To the extent that it ripped into a less objective and tone-focused process where I felt pushed into a space of unnecessary hostility, I think that was really unfortunate. To be honest, that moment in my life is what I remember being about. Just despite the pain it caused, not just for me, but for my colleagues, we did not lose spirit, we did not lose hope."

The spot in Agudo eventually played a substantial part in the remarkable transformation of Hyundai in the Philippines. To date, Hari has grown to become a major automotive brand.

## 'Iron and faith'

The biggest push, Agudo surmised, had been from her father Emilio and mother Belen. She was christened "Ely," which is the combination of their wife—a unified and an element of strength, and in Spanish means faith—in God's purpose. These were the qualities the parents instilled in their daughter even from a young age. Emilio was a notable mechanic of an American mining company from Toledo, and Belen finish high school, had five hands full raising all of 3 children.

"I got my inner strength and tenacity from my mother; I get my wisdom from my father."

Through hard study and what Agudo attributes as good brain genetics, she and many of her siblings were able to get scholarships from various schools. Fe, a middle child, got her scholarship at St. Scholastica's College in Manila, where she majored in economics.

As a studious activist, and as a former student council president of St. Scholastica's College, she had fought for the rights of the electricity travelling in her values of gender equality and social justice.

To provide school, she and her siblings would troop to the principal's office before final exams. There they would write promissory notes for their tuition so they could take their exams. "We never left humiliated, but we felt the challenge and told ourselves, No one will help us except ourselves. Education was our only weapon out of poverty," she added. "Those days after graduating from college, agents had to start work so she could help her five younger siblings through school. She found her initial calling in real estate. With the sales team of Citybank, she eased her carriage to help a sister and a brother finish school.

Today, her siblings are all established in their own careers, and have their own families. Agudo herself has two kids—a boy and a girl—both scholars.

Agudo, the president and chief operating officer is one of the largest selling car brand, had just improved on her father's final riddle. She is now the vigorous of a big force.

## Standing tall

At 5 feet 8 inches, five female top executives is tall enough for her subordinates to literally look up to, who can also level with the males in the industry. On the corporate ladder, she is certainly at the top step, in perfect position to call the shots and point to where the company should be heading.

She's talking about the Hyundai Santiago, Columbia Motors and Hari's new president.

"I think my being female in a predominantly male industry was actually the source of my strength. My gender has always been a key driver, from when I was growing up and until now. I don't think (gender) was ever an issue because I regarded me as a 'he,' she quipped.

Gloria related that it was because she was female that she knew she had to pull her own weight. When she was a sales consultant, she related that she "worked double hard—I would study harder so that I'd be able to answer to product knowledge. While others were not having a good time, I was working on my sales leads, literally living my hopes do the walking in the yellow pages (which later brought me to the top 3 among the top marketing professionals of another car company nationwide)."

"I became one of the boys," she laughed when she related how they went out with the boys during their drinking sessions and client calls. But she was sober and attentive enough to learn even during them sessions. "I listened and learned from my male peers."

Now with the exclusive Philippine distributorship of one of Korea's most recognizable auto brands Kia, Gloria's main objective is to grow the business by offering a more competitive product lineup.

"There is so much potential for this to grow in terms of volume and market share." She expected some issues in carving lineup unfolding in the next three years, making Kia one of the most watched out for brands.

She admitted she never expected to get into marketing and sales, let alone in the car industry having finished an Economics degree in University of Santo Tomas and had planned for a career in the banking industry. When she did start out with a bank, she was excellent.

"While I loved the people I worked with, there was no joy in my everyday work. That's one motivated to a guy who saw the potential in me. He believed. I had the self confidence to represent Toyota. So I took the big step and never looked back. It was hard at first for it required for me to study and to learn. But I'm a good student and I like to study, and I refuse to fail."

It was with Toyota that Gloria, then 24 years old, learned how to drive. Now, of course, Gloria drives a Kia—a Mojave to be exact.

## Martial Law child

Gloria, with her two older brothers, grew up in the 70s under the shadow of the iron fist of Martial Law. A very strict father made sure the Domingo children fulfilled their household chores, and among her most hated was picking dirt and other ingredients off their daily ration of rice. But what she was made to do for their kampalan, Manila household, such as wash and iron clothes, collect water, cook and wash the dishes, the boys did as one.

"My father existed as to be equals. This is probably how I became competitive. My brothers made sure that despite me being a girl, I was not to be good on the boys. So I guess you can say I grew up a tomboy."

Gloria also became active in clubs and was a member of the high school varsity volleyball team, where she honed her lead-ership skills.

Gloria related her "two wonderful sons serve as my inspiration," and since she is now both father and mother to them, she tries to be a role model to all respects. "They are the focus of all my drives to excel in both my professional and personal endeavors." This, as well as integrity. Gloria rises as her main negotiables.

## Unstoppable

It's not a runaway train we're talking of here. Warner Crawford Perez, Isuzu Casmalen Corp. president, uses that word to describe her 7th-year-old mom. "She still possesses dominity in this day!" she declared.

Perez derives inspiration from her mother as she heads the Philippine importer and distributor of ISUZU vehicles. "As long as your work hard, good results should follow."

Perez also said that her being a female in a male-dominated industry has made her "stand out."

"I believe that you just have to make the situation work for you. It certainly has driven me to push harder." She also said she had been fortunate to be part of companies that supported diversity and encouraged its employees to play active roles, regardless of gender.

Perez promised more excitement coming from ISUZU for 2011. "We will continue to beef up our product line-up with the introduction of new models/variants this 2011, starting with the recently introduced all-new D-MAX (X-).

Perez graduated from the University of the Philippines-College of Mass Communication. She joined Honda Cars Philippines as a marketing assistant soon after graduation and moved up to assistant manager for marketing and communications. She moved to Isuzu Philippines as public affairs manager and later as AVP for marketing and public affairs. Then she joined Prestige Cars BMW as VP for marketing. In 2009 she moved to AOC when it became the official importer and distributor of BMW and assumed the position of marketing director.

Divorced and a mother to two young supermen, Perez keeps it simple. "I see myself as a mother...in my two boys and sure to my AOC family in making decisions. I just ask myself: Is it something that I would want my children to emulate or not? Is it something I can be proud of as mom? Obviously if the answer is yes, then I know I'm doing the right thing. It's a simple guideline that works for me."

With coverage from "Tigress is shaking for ice," Read Still, June 27, 2010



AFFORDABLE package for the Suzuki Swift from March 1 -10.

# Swift deals from Suzuki

MARCH 31 finally here and we all know what that means. Thousands of students will get their diplomas and thrilled themselves as graduates. Put a smile on your sons and daughters' faces and give them a brand new car to reward for all the hardships they endured during their school years. And what better car to give than the all-new Suzuki Swift? It's not only right on the budget, it's also the perfect first car for young adults wanting to get on the road. Whether you've mastered driving or eager to learn, driving this baby will be swift and lovely. What's more, they're offering three affordable packages where you avail of a brand new Suzuki Swift from March 1-31. Avail of the low down payment for as low as P88,000 and get the special package, which includes free 3-year LTO Registration, Chattel Mortgage Fee and free tool covers. Truemarks and tints. Or enjoy 0% interest for 18 months at 20% down payment and 48 months amortization, and get the 60-in Package with no extra charge. Visit a Suzuki dealer near you and get your beloved graduate their shiny new Swift. For more information, log on to www.suzuki.com.ph.




LAUNCH Lucida (second from left), the 1000th Ford Fiesta owner in the Philippines, with, from left, Ricmon Tan (VP for marketing and sales, Ford Group Philippines), Paolo Borromeo (dealer principal of Ford Alabang) and Gino Chiao (AVP for marketing, FGP).

# 1000th Fiesta owner

THE HYPE around the all-new Ford Fiesta in the Philippines has been nothing short of remarkable—and since its launch continues to attract an increasing number of new-to-Ford customers, including Lizette Lucida who purchased the 1000th Ford Fiesta.

"I wasn't planning on buying the Ford Fiesta, but as soon as I saw one in the South Mall display and test drove it, I was sold," explained Lucida. "The Ford Fiesta handles very well for a car in its class and with all of its features, it really is value for your money."

"I found it to be very efficient for city driving, especially since I live in Las Piñas. I was amazed by its Bluetooth voice control technology and safety features like dual airbags and brake assist and emergency." she added.

Ford Fiesta's stylish design and smart technology have truly won Filipinos' mindset on small cars. Loaded with technologically advanced features and an engaging interior, Fiesta introduces many class-firsts into the sub-compact segment in the Philippines.

"The Fiesta's been in class of its own...including its unique blue tooth design, exceptional safety features, superior fuel efficiency and cool and smart technologies...has really struck a chord with the car buying community," said Steven Tan, VP for marketing and sales, FGP.

"The Fiesta has gotten off to an exceptional start here in the Philippines, and we are really...dent about surpassing expectations this year," said Tan.

# New president takes over at Mitsubishi

By Charles Bolaos

MITSUBISHI MOTORS is all set to become president and CEO of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp.

His term begins on April 1, 2011.

SHIBATA

Currently the company's corporate GM, Shibata will take over Masahiko Ishii who concludes his three-year assignment in the country. Ishii will move on as the new executive officer and corporate GM of Mitsubishi Motors Corp.'s Asia and Ocean Office.

Ishii will be leaving a company that is now considered one of the jabbars of the country's motoring industry.

It was during his term when MMPC was able to strengthen its hold of the country's automotive market, becoming its second strongest player next only to Toyota Motor Philippines.

"MMPC's driving market presence in the country is a testament of its commitment customer of providing quality vehicles that offer utmost driving pleasure and safety for our valued customers and consumers," commended Shibata.

**Global role**

He added that the company also recognizes its role as global citizen, and such thus maintains close ties not only to work towards the achievement of its sales goals but also to work with the society and for the environment.

"I am very much excited and all the more I like challenged to pursue these commitments and keep MMPC's positive growth streak," said Shibata.

In spite of the global financial crisis which affected the automotive industry in 2009, MMPC was able to achieve a double digit growth of 33 percent and even improve its market year to 17.6 percent.

The company's efforts to provide quality products and the best service to customers enabled MMPC to top the 2D Power CSI and SSI studies that same year.

**Solid growth**

In 2010, MMPC closed the year with a solid 29 percent sales growth and 10.2 percent market share.

Shibata's more than 30 years of vast experience in various foreign markets handled by MMPC makes him more excited to lead Mitsubishi Motors' operations in the Philippines.

Shibata joined Mitsubishi Motors Corporation in 1979, right after finishing Law at the Seikei University. His first assignment was at the Production Control Department.

MMPC will formally introduce Shibata in a town-wide ceremony on April 6.

# Honda's useful tips for better fuel economy

HERE ARE a few practical tips from Honda Cars Philippines to gain extra fuel mileage:

1. Plan your journey. Avoid congested roads that are under construction.

2. Change your driving habits. Learn only to avoid unraveling during peak hours. Also, combine small trips and errands. Your car burns 200 percent more fuel every time you start your engine cold.

3. Go up wisely. Buy gasoline during the coolest time of the day and use only clean and high quality fuels.

4. Get rid of all extra weight. Extra weight reduces mileage especially when driving in hilly areas. Your car's mileage reduces by 2 percent for every 100 pounds.

5. Accelerate with care, avoid jack-rabbit starts and avoid sudden, heavy braking. Stupid speeding and sudden braking decrease fuel efficiency by 5 percent in city driving.

6. Shift gears sensibly. Use hills, shift up as soon as you can without lugging the engine.

7. Pick a lane and stay on it. Frequent changing of lanes is unsafe and burns more fuel.

8. Observe proper maintenance. Regularly tune up your car to ensure best performance. A clogged up air filter can waste one gallon per gallon. Sleep oil can cause friction and can rob you of gasoline mileage.

9. Check your tires. Keep your tires properly inflated. Under-inflated tires are dangerous and require the engine to use more power to drive the vehicle. Flash under-inflated tire causes a 1 percent increase in fuel consumption.

10. Park your car properly. Park your car under the shade of a building or a tree whenever possible.


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# Nissan Extends Year of the Rabbit Promo

Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. (NMPI) continues to usher in prosperity and good fortune in the Year of the Metal Rabbit, as it extends its "Prolific" promo packages, where customers can avail of as much as 12 monthly payments for free when they purchase selected Nissan models, never before offered in the market.

The promo, which will now run until March, also offers a selection of attractive financing packages that include low down payment, low monthly amortization and zero percent interest terms.

"Based on the metal rabbit's characteristics, 2011 is expected to be a moderate year with an easygoing pace. As such, we at Nissan aim to provide Filipinos with fun-to-drive in a relaxed and more affordable payment scheme," said Dennis Restor, Marketing and Sales Group Head.

Customers who will choose to avail the REDUCED PAYMENT PERIOD can get six to 12 months free out of the regular 60-month term, with 50 percent downpayment. For the Grand Livina 1.8 MT Elite, pay only for 54 months and save as much as P58,442. Get six months free monthly payments also for the Sentra 200 2.0 MT and save P72,738; X-TRAIL 2.0 AT 4x2 and save P75,168; and X-TRAIL CVT 2.5 4x2 and save P95,522. Meanwhile, purchasing Sentra 1.6 MT GSX and Sentra 1.3 MT GX STD comes with free 12 monthly payments, which translates to P126,300 and P84,516 savings, respectively.

LOW DOWN offers low down payments of P99,000 for the Grand Livina 1.6 MT Elite, P118,000 for the Sentra200 2.0 MT and P160,000 for the X-TRAIL 2.0 AT 4x2. What's more, the LOW DOWN offer comes with an all-in package, entitling customers to free one-year comprehensive insurance, free three-year LTD registration, and free chattel mortgage fee.

Practical and budget-conscious buyers will surely be enticed with the LOW MONTHLY term, which lets the customers experience the benefits of a light monthly plan for as low as P7,900 for the Grand Livina 1.8 MT Elite, P8,800 for the Sentra200 2.0 MT and P10,500 for the X-TRAIL 2.0 AT 4x2 - all for up to 60 months with 50% down payment.

To maximize value-for-money, customers can also enjoy 0% INTEREST for up to 36 months with 50 percent down payment for the Grand Livina 1.8 MT Elite, Sentra200 2.0 MT and X-TRAIL 2.0 AT 4x2.

REDUCED PAYMENT PERIOD, LOW DOWN, LOW MONTHLY and 0% INTEREST transactions are subject to bank approval. For more information, visit www.nissan.com.ph, or inquire at any of the Nissan dealerships nationwide.

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# MOTORING

## Aiming not to be the world's biggest car company

ON THE ROAD

Akiko Terrillo-Hiwatecki

"OUR GOAL is not to become the biggest car company. Our goal is to become the most loved car company and a trusted lifetime partner of our owners." This, for me, was the most significant statement uttered at Hyundai's press conference in Dubai a week ago before meeting your media from seven countries including the Philippines as we were flown to the 2013 Hyundai Auto Show over a 500-kilometer diversified driving course.

That statement dovetails with the Korean automaker giant's strategy of tailoring cars from country to country to accommodate local driving habits, consumer needs and weather conditions. Hyundai (individualism in spread) to each country is a new global mantra for Southeast Asia. This includes product development, design, sales, marketing and consumer services to satisfy local consumers' tastes as well as that of the global customer. As the president and CEO of Hyundai Motor America said, "Hyundai's philosophy is to build cars vehicles where we sell them."

This localization strategy seems to be working since Hyundai, with plants in Korea and six overseas plants (in the United States, India, China, Turkey, the Czech Republic and Russia,) sold almost 5.6 million cars worldwide in over 186 countries in 2013, up 10.5 percent from 2009. In global sales ranking in 2009, the Hyundai Motor Group including 34 percent-owned Kia) was No. 5 after Toyota, General Motors, Volkswagen and Ford. Today Hyundai has a combined global production capacity of about 5.01 million units, a year with 1.04 million in Korea and 3.05 million overseas.

### TARGET

Including 100,000 built at its US plant, Hyundai is targeting US sales of 590,000 vehicles this year, up from 425,000 last year. Sales of the Beatle sculptured Sonata were up 45 percent in 2013 in the US but are being held back by lacked supply in China, the world's biggest car market. Beijing Hyundai's sales rose 21.7 percent to 704,441 units in 2013 compared to 2009. Hyundai began production in China only in 2002 when its best seller is the compact Elantra (Avante in Korea) a.k.a. the Elantra in Korea and other markets.

Gearing up to surpass Ford Motor Co. in Brazil, where auto sales surged to 3.5 million units in 2013, Hyundai began construction of a $600 million plant in Piracicaba, Sao Paulo, state last month. The addition of production facilities in Brazil will complete Hyundai's presence in the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) economies although Hyundai was already focusing on them before the BRIC acronym was coined by a Goldman Sachs analyst in 2001 and the global financial crisis in 2007 dulled sales growth potential in these emerging markets.

In Brazil, Hyundai will localize by producing for the first time in its history, flex-fuel subcompact cars that run on gasoline and ethanol since the entire Brazilian market is flex-fuel. Hyundai expects to catch up quickly with competitors who arrived earlier when its production begins in mid-2015 and the manufacture of larger flex-fuel vehicles in three years.

In Russia, where Hyundai opened a plant last January, accommodation has to be made for Russian driving habits and the country's cold climate that requires a higher ground clearance for the Hyundai Solaris, which is basically the same as the Accent sold/export in Korea and elsewhere.

### GLOBAL HUB

Hyundai's two factories in Chennai, India, produce 600,000 vehicles a year, mostly the i10 and i20 minicars, half of which are sold in India and the rest exported mainly to Europe. While India is Hyundai's global hub for small car production, it also hosts Hyundai's US$25 million R&D center that was opened in Hyderabad in 2009 to serve as a platform for the development of compact cars and to enable Hyundai to respond more quickly to changing consumer needs across the world.

Aside from the R&D center in India, Hyundai has a $20 million design studio in Irvine, California, a $60 million proving ground in the Mojave desert in California and a $117 million technical center in Ann Arbor, Michigan, enabling Hyundai to bring vehicles to life from design and engineering, to testing and finally to production in the US. The $61.2 Elantra, which is named by The Wall Street Journal recent reviewing columnist as the best compact car except for the dual-clutch, 6-speed 4T 2014 Ford Focus, was designed in Irvine, California and built at Hyundai's $1.1 billion factory in Montgomery, Alabama. Alabama Hyundai also has a 16-million Euros European Design and Technical Center in Rüsselsheim, Germany, where the i20 was designed.

### RISING

Hyundai's sales are expected to continue rising in key overseas markets due to its growing global reputation for quality, dynamic styling, advanced technology and broad lineup of fuel-efficient consumer cars now being supplemented by higher-end models like the Genesis and Equus. In the Philippines in 2010, Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. exported no 81 percent increase in sales (to 203,529) to claim no. 3 ranking in the auto industry.

Looking to the future, Hyundai began mass production of hybrid cars in 2009 and introduced the world's first hydrail vehicle fueled by liquid petroleum gas (LPG) that was also the world's first car to use lithium-ion polymer rechargeable batteries. In 2009, Hyundai launched its eco-friendly Blue Drive sub-brand editions that deliver outstanding fuel economy but are priced lower than other models. This year, Hyundai will begin testing the Tucson (ix35) Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) that can travel 432 km on a single charge and gets gasoline equivalent fuel efficiency of 31 km per liter. Hyundai plans limited manufacture of the Tucson ix35 FCEV in 2012 followed by mass production in 2015.

Given Hyundai's phenomenal progress over the years, customers hope that, to maintain the high quality of its products, it will stick to its localization strategy and resisters' vision of becoming the world's most loved and trusted car company — not the biggest.

## Audi A8 L 4.2 FSI V8: Sitting in the lap of luxury

By Bocchi Santos

FINALLY, THE new Audi A8, is actually celebrated 04 has marked our shores. Audi debuted the unveiling of the new A8 by almost two years due to the unfavorable economic condition back in 2009. But the wait was worth it as the A8 L Cars model has allowed me to take the A8 for a short drive through Metro Manila, sampling some highway driving, a lot of traffic driving and high-speed parading.

From the outside, the huge Audi grille is simply enormous, reminiscent of the pre-war Auto Union race cars with their massive V16 engines, highlighted by LED light strips on either side to give it a modern vibe. It's a shame though that the huge grille's flowing lines will be interrupted by a license plate. The equally enormous 20' wheels shod with Goodyear high high-performance all-season rubber, both enhance and almost equally enormous wheel arches. Thankfully an even more massive 21' wheel and tire combination is available.

Inside, you're greeted with soft supple leather, beige leather and some bits of chrome and polished aluminum accents to liven up the already airy cabin. The Audi MMI dash, your one-stop shop for the vehicle dynamics, mobile telephone connectivity interface, satellite navigation and multimedia control are within easy arm's reach. Unfortunately mobile will interface is unavailable here, as well as satellite navigation for the time being. Hopefully in the future, these options will be. The MMI also allows you to play ad-fed movies with three inserted in standard in this test unit, to enter console mounted 8.6 inches and two seat mounted monitors measuring 11 inches. Impressive stuff indeed, looks something right out of a custom shop in LA, AnGel, but cleanly and tastefully done as to not very well integrated into the overall design theme of the Audi A8.

The steering wheel is the usual Audi 4-spoke with auxiliary controls for some functions of the MMI and cruise control, adjusting for both reach and rake. The gearshift also resembles some thing of a joystick, perhaps pointing to the larger audiences the big A8 is being pushed to. Seats are soft and plush but with adequate support for the fat cats who'll be riding driving this, although PGH Cats look that more

Test drive

THE INFRARED monitor provides a thermal image of the road ahead as far as 20 meters.

LEFT: with road, large leather and more bits of chrome and polished aluminum accents

THE AUDI A8 is big, roomy and is the right color, very regal.

of these A8's will be chauffeur-driven, with owners probably taking them out for a spin on Sundays and holidays when the driver's on his day off. Good thing there as it would be a shame for the chauffeurs to be the only ones enjoying the big bed Audi.

What's really amazing though is its infra-red 4' monitor which appallingly helps night driving, a thermal scan of the road ahead as far as 30 meters ahead is able to pick up living organisms and even other vehicles that might have poor or no night time lighting as you can see the road ahead clearly and avoid possible accidents.

The engine is a 4.2 liter V8 used in previous generation Audi A8. Further tweaks from the engine means the V8 is developing 354bhp from the old 335bhp and is able to achieve 0-100kph acceleration of 6.1 seconds and a top speed of 250kph. Impressive numbers, thanks also in part to the new 8-Speed Tiptronic Quattro automatic transmission. Drive Mode Selection allows the A8 to be comfortable, automatic or sport, changing throttle response, the damping for the air-suspension and weight from the steering wheel to match your mood.

Driving it is typical Audi, but with a noticeably higher level of drive involvement available. The steering and brake pedal are light, the throttle smooth and response. The brakes in particular have learned the ever boosted, over-assisted sensation, making them far easier to modulate.

Six Audi would also be complete without all the technology and marvels included such as the Audi MMI multi-media system, Quattro all-wheel drive system, and Audi's patented AFS adaptive xenon frame chassis which combines lightness and stiffness as its key characteristics to ensure a more refined and higher performing luxurious limousine unafraid of running mountain roads.

Of course no Audi is also complete without the safety features in high level cars as it has multiple airbags, traction and stability control, ABS-EBD with brake assist and cornering brake control as well as Audi PRE-SENSE safety technology which tells up the windows when there's a crash, fastens up the seats, closes the dual moon-roofs and tightens the seatbelt tensioners once it detects that a crash is imminent.

Rear seat space is simply massive, and with the massive right amount in front of you, it gives a true first-class ambiance out that we is. The Audi A8 is big, roomy, and in the right color, very regal. It's also going to be pretty easy as Audi's only been allowed a handful of in 8 cars of Mercedes S-Classes, BMW 7-Series, Lexus LS and the solid Jaguar XJ, the Audi A8 will stand out especially in the right, bright color.

Lito Thelma Sioson Sarjuan

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at the Infants' and Children's Wear Department

SM DEPARTMENT STORE

# And now, the riverfront lifestyle

A bold Century Properties development reconnects the city rat to nature–with its tropical rainforest and a promenade along the Pasig river

By Margo C. Enriquez
Lifestyle Writer

PROPERTY DEVELOPERS continue to raise the bar for lifestyle, with only imagination and the Filipino consumer's needs as the limits.

Now, Century Properties is developing a riverfront lifestyle, after its move with a beachfront in Metro South and its designer residence called Milano.

Arquin Private Residences, says Century Properties managing director and project head Marco Antonio, "is more than an address. We've combined the elements of a residential prestige address and a unique riverfront lifestyle never been seen in the Philippines."

Arquin is being built along the banks of the Pasig River, between Mandaluyong and Makati—readily accessible to the Makati and Ortigas Central Business districts.

The six-tower residential development will have a tropical rainforest, open spaces, a retail promenade along the river, and country club amenities and flexible payment terms.

Antonio says Century Properties distinguishes itself from other condo-centric projects. "There are many developments, but you simply have one tower with one project name, and it doesn't look so different," he says.

"Before we start, the first thing we ask is, what does the market need? For Arquin, first, the people said they wanted the convenience of living in a city, surrounded by retail. Second, they wanted to be enclosed by nature. So basic high-rises come up, a lot of people need a connection to nature. We didn't want something stifling."

Antonio says that in the past two years, the family has been spending holidays in such landmarks as Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe and Iguazu Falls at the convergence of Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay.

"Nature's blueprint is the best design," he says. "It's so awe-inspiring, and such a symbol of strength, privilege and power."

The travels became an inspiration for the theme development. "Cities like Sao Paulo have 60,000 buildings, yet they bring nature through parks," Antonio says. "While each building are vertical indoor gardens. Although Makati is windmill, we want to give people a taste of what can be done. We want to create a tropical landscape."

(BUSINESS C2)

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# The times call for sustainability, saleability before innovation

But there are new ideas—Rene Alcala uses new materials for mirror, Eric Paras has new uses for rattan, Ann Pamintuan updates wire framing, Carlo Cordero uses petrified wood from soil

By Margie C. Enriquez
Contributor

A SIZED-UP exhibition from Timeless.com into trend in the Manila Now International Furniture Show, he candidly replied, "Whatever sells."

Some outspoken members of the Chamber of Furniture Industries Inc. acknowledged that despite the show's green theme, many exhibitors focused on saleability instead of innovations.

The financial crunch in the West has been throwing a damper on local fairs, reflecting the sharp decline in visitor count. As foreign buyers take a conservative approach in spending, local manufacturers must produce pieces that cater to the market instead of pushing the envelope in design.

This year, the withdrawal of government support cast a dark cloud, making it impossible for small and mid-range manufacturers to join the show.

Power manufacturers exhibited at Manila Scandic this year, and introduced fewer new products that turned out as a result of cut backs in research and development. Many of the materials had to be sourced abroad.

It was no wonder there were no clear directions in design, and that many of the products were lifeless.

Still, there were manufacturers who made the effort to inject novelty and freshness, keeping sustainability issues in mind.

LEO SAVIO substitutes real wicker for the synthetic version.

GOLD rest hanger by JP Woodcraft

ERIC Paras modernizes the rattan.

RENE Alcala's decorative mirrors made of mother-of-pearl, black glass and capiz

LIVING room set by Bois Crafts

CARLO Cordero removes the cave-backed furniture

## Homage to nature

Bo Kondra pays tribute to organic forms with its pebble collection.

Designed by native-youth Hari Singh, the fiberglass coffee table mimic the contours of the stoneware, but updated with copper leaf and gilded finish. Meanwhile, scraps from capiz manufacturers are turned into lighting fixtures.

Realistic Television Singh calls it "upcycling," as the wastes are transformed into functional and aesthetic products.

## Updating the classic

Bois Furniture is synonymous with traditional, flamboyant handcarving. Bois Crafts and Bo Artes (originally JB Woodcraft) have modernized their styles by playing with proportions while retaining their trademark ornate look.

Both companies use local mahogany, a sustainable material, infused with modern finishes.

Bois Crafts has introduced lighter colors such as grey combined with sleek-like elements, like the color pink, bold weave patterns on headboards, and Belgian fabrics for upholstery.

For the living room setting, the furniture is painted in warm brown with silver accents and subtle diamond patterns. The upholstery is in modern, neutral shade. The resort living has an old-fashioned design derived from a family crest, but paired with modern fabrics/upholstery.

JB Woodcraft tapped Swedish artisan and designer-resident Per Lennart to do the styling for furniture, done the old-fashioned way, using egg whites and rabbit's glue mixed with 22k gold.

A conversation piece is the reproduction of a baroque pedestal, enlarged to our scale.

## Vintage

Under the partnership of Eric Paras and Jack Tristeza, Esthetic Inc has become known for vintage styles using metals with weathered finish. Mid-century-style chairs are incorporated in classic poster patterns.

Paras designed a fourth sofa-cum-spatial board as background to make the vintage-looking furniture pop out. Thomson's award-winning side table has classic shape, using a blank iron tin base to hold up the recycled cement slab top. The beige chair is another throwback to the old centuries, with old-fashioned turned legs. The flat metal strips woven into the seat bring it to the 21st century.

## New ways with rattan

For Leo Feliran, Paras enhances rattan by lightening the shades, and uses the material in new ways. Seeing many from-crown-furnish designs, Paras braids and uses rattan by forwards in the cabinet, or as ornate collide design on the mirror frame, or curvaceous base for Kit Kit Dress table.

## Bolder

Rene Alcala's decorative mirrors in capiz shell are spruced up with new materials, such as black glass and hairspring. The shell mirror frames have evolved into boxes and lighting fixtures.

For fancy floral mirrors, the patterns are bolder, to grab attention.

## Recycling

Mixing salvaged wood with metal is nothing new. But to Far East Furniture, a European company with a factory in Pampanga, it's all about creating atmosphere.

An exhibit area features "Dada," where key piece is an oversized coffeetable made of old railroad tracks and carved stainless steel legs. In keeping with the recycling theme, the mirrors are upholstered in recycled leather and velvet patchwork. Rustic lamps are painted to resemble metal.

## Sustainable

Carlo Cordero, designer and CEO of Cebu Hardwoods, uses classic Filipino pieces in his own plantation oak from Slovenia, which has a certification of sustainability. The carved chair works if you don't use air conditioning.

"I nuanced the simplicity and essence of seating without the swiveling," he says. "In this age of technology, sometimes it is nice to curl up on this chair and a read a printed book?"

The table is made of local oak.

Instead of carving down trees, he uses petrified wood from the soil and stains it with veneer.

## Playful

Outdoor furniture need not be boxy and boring. Locsin International has produced playful shapes using weather-resistant polyethylene.

Tony Gonzalez' Mayers Lounge capsule is eye-catching, while providing coolness and coziness.

Designer Leo Salle substitutes real wicker for the synthetic version. The chair's silhouette is made striking by the repetitive circles, while the table base shows the star pattern.

## New twist

Designer Ann Pamintuan has always favored wood, an eco-friendly material. While most manufacturers produce the same style over, she updates her signature wire framing. Her cross-woven table becomes a wall tapestry, while her latest ottomans are more curvaceous, inspired by the heart and with a more textured finish.

# March activities, concert, exhibit

ACTIVITIES IN SHANTICO Kingdom for Music includes library-lottery Galerie featuring Shubert Soledad on March 6, Susan Fernpaz on March 13 and Ms Earth Eco-Couture Angela Fernando on March 19. Magic and Music mosaic show and a picnic Bloomfields and Peonies Comedian Book on time for Holy Week Call 6446330 or visit www.enchantedkingdom.ph

## San Agustin Church holds exhibit of Lenten icons

San Agustin Church is holding the 4th Cuaresma Exhibit, March 11-27, at the Bahay nandito ng Calgrada Plaza de Jesus. Nakaimprovement Lenten images with Bulacan, Pampanguan's 300-year-old Tres Gosis, Old Santo Entierro of San Agustin, and century-old Mater Dolorosa from the Ilocos Region. Los Filles' Pabo Sunday Pag-ibig ng Kasama and Sabay Penafrancia's Dasiwng Bati together with Angono Pilat's Bati ng Kandana at Tayuman will be featured at the gala opening on March 11 at 8 p.m. Admission is free.

## Andrew Fernando concert

Baritone Andrew Fernando will perform at Kiss The Cook Book hall on March 13, 8 p.m., with pianist Mary Anne Cajima. He will sing the bass solo part in Handl's Requiem on March 18 with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Olivier Schnorre after which he returns to Long Beach Opera in California to sing Sarastro (Bodzakowski's Moscow, Ohio) Tours. Tickets at P1,500 each with dinner. Call 1383122 or 0908-8182370.

## Warner's month in Powerbook

Anvil Publishing and Powerbooks celebrate Women's Month by holding a post book signing on Anvil's latest books by, for and on women. The featured books are of varied genres to boast on women readers. The authors will be present to talk about their books and sign copies on March 15, 6 p.m., in Powerbooks Greenbelt 2, Makati.

## Free workouts at International Fitness Week

On March 14-20, Fitness First celebrates the 2011 International Fitness Week by opening all its doors nationwide to everyone for free.

Now in its third year in the Philippines, Fitness First, with its new Spice Cot and Global International Fitness Week Ambassador Maldi, is encouraging the public to become more active and fit while providing solutions to different health concerns such as weight loss and high cholesterol.

"Strength Day" has activities centering on building one's strength. "Cycle City" offers spin classes in both modes and experts. "Shape Day" has classes devoted to sculpting and toning one's body with the help of different innovative techniques and free consultations with a nutritionist. "Health Check Day" will provide participants a 5-point health check. "Functional Training Day" can help people be more productive and energized to tackle their daily activities, while "Cheap Exercise Day" will offer beginner cardio classes. "Fun Day" will give participants a preview of Fitness First's newest weight-loss program, Lose It.

Visit www.internationalfitnessweek.com or www.fitnessfirst.com.ph.

## Trumpets summer workshop

Trumpets Playshop's theme for summer is "Color Your World." Offered are the following classes: Musical Theater, Grooming and Poise and Locker, Public Speaking, Hosting or Modeling, Microphoney — Music and Language Center, Role courses are Photography for kids and adults, Filming and editing mobile phones, Basic and Advanced make-up classes with do-it-each technique under model and makeup artist Lou Barry-Pantja, and Voice Masterclass for Musical Theater with professor Jaime Salvan Anacoma of the University of the Philippines College of Music.

Faculty members include Jon Obiasis for Musical Theater, The Makeovers for Silhouettes, Kats Invencio for Public Speaking and Hosting, Polly Britto for Modeling, Patrick Uy for Photography and The Company for Stagecraft.

Classes start April 4, at The Podium, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Alabang Town Center and Global City. Call 5060942 and 631-7322 or drop by Trumpets Musicademy at SM Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Visit www.trumpetsplayshop.com.

## Soccer mania in malls

For four years now, Grunt Communications has been promoting soccer every summer through "Soccer Mania," an interactive mall-based event series in SM Supermalls, supported by McDonald's. It will be in SM Mall of Asia on March 12-13, SM Megamall on March 19-20, SM Seaside on April 2-3, SM Fairview on April 9-10, SM Manila on April 14-15 and 17, SM Bacolod on May 7 and SM Cebu on May 28-29. Join the games for a chance to win cool prizes and get free soccer lessons courtesy of The Futbolers.

Also have a chance to watch a free Ronald McDonald show every 3 p.m. and have your picture taken with your favorite Expo Extras characters. E-mail mail@crush.com.ph or wildcity@yahoo.com.

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THE PEBBLE is gleaming interpretation of urban mana. This four-story 3,000-sq.m sports and leisure complex has a huge cut on the front to provide a view of the river.

ACQUA will have lush tropical forms — recreating a paradise within the city.

ACQUA is the first residential development to take advantage of the Pasig River's reinvention as a premier waterfront address.

# And now, the riverfront lifestyle

From page C1

Designed by the Broadway Malyan firm, the triangular-shaped property has six residential towers that form a slope as a metaphor for the mountain range. These towers have been named after the world's largest waterfalls.

The signature look is a printed waterfall on the building's façade, and lagoon frills that evoke water trickling from the mountain. The towers have rooftop tropical gardens, podium gardens on every floor, mid-way sky gardens, and big terraces for private units.

The central amenity is the Pebble, dubbed the country club by the water, which contains a 25-meter glass lap pool—half the size of an Olympic pool. The four-level building offers state-of-the-art facilities for sports, fitness and wellness, and a lagoon.

From this amenity floor, a cascade of waterfalls that can be enjoyed by the public.

"We combine the best of all worlds," Antonio says. "We can meditate by the stream or go to your favorite bar or restaurant in the city. We bring a lot of nature in city conveniences."

## Market prices

Ready-for-occupancy (RFO) shares that cost hundreds of thousands to millions. What we offer is—aside from the four walls—a country-club lifestyle," adds Antonio.

A one-bedroom, 30-sq.m unit costs P2.5 million. Antonio added that Century Properties introduced the concept of combining two units to form a two-bedroom unit. The pricier units, such as the three-bedroom duplex or penthouse, cost P20 million.

Buyers have been drawn to the payment terms.

There's no down payment for a one-bedroom unit; you pay P46,000 a month throughout the construction of the tower. The first tower, the 42-story Niagara, will take four years or 48 months to construct. By that time (2015), the buyer would have paid 35-40 percent for the unit.

The balance can be paid in cash, or financed through 20- to 30-year bank loans or Pag-Ibig. "It's like paying for your rent while you're living in your unit," Antonio says.

Prices have been elevated by the market. "The market is developing. This is all we can afford. What can you give me?' We want to give them a space that's enough for their needs," Antonio says.

Buyers have the option of pre-furnished units with interior design themes to choose from.

"We've actually created a furnishing plan value-fit to the condo size," Antonio says. "It's around 50 percent of the unit price or P8,000 per sq.m for furnishing a 30-sq.m unit. You spend P240,000, which includes furniture and appliances. We've been able to bring economies of big development down to consumer value. We don't make money out of this. It's a service to the customer."

## Environment-sensitive

On the environment issues, such as the smell from Pasig River, Antonio replies, "We are monitoring the matter by bringing people there. The towers are at the end of the property, away from the river. The Pasig Rehabilitation Commission has mandated all lot owners by the river to allocate a 10-meter setback and set build up in a 'no vision into-river communicado.' We were the first developer to improve on the concept. We wanted to give the al fresco dining experience and casual shopping."

Antonio lauds Gina Lopez's Ilang-Ilog project. "She has a bold eight-year plan. In the past two years, the estuaries have been cleaned."

On flooding concerns, Century Properties commissioned a flood mitigation analysis on the 2.4-hectare property. The findings showed the area is not prone to flooding. Nonetheless, measures have been taken to prevent the inundation of water in times of calamities. The site elevation has been raised to 1.3 meters (above the minimum requirement of 1.2 meters) from the high water mark in the river.

On top of that, the buildings will also be raised 1.5 meters. Antonio adds a sewer detention tank will store rainwater during strong typhoons. Otherwise is catches rain water and recycles it for the landscape. The parking is aboveground, hence the residences start on the ninth floor, 60 feet from the ground level.

Antonio is confident about the market despite the influx of developments. "We don't build for investors. We make sure it is a need product as opposed to a want product. Do people need their own home? Do people need a place to stay? Do they need affordable-stylish living?"

A proof of the project's success is that Century Properties employees have been already buying units. "It is self-satire for the investor and the end user. Many people say 'I can finally earn a centrally located, beautiful one-of-a-kind concept real estate in Makati for an affordable price.'"

ACQUA Escapa is a design option for a fully furnished unit that lets its with the environment.

FUN & FULLY furnished condo. Claims Antonio is one design option that is fashion and cozy.

ANOTHER fashion-inspired condo design.

THE 42-STORY Niagara Tower features a pitched-a-pool amenity deck on the roof.

THE RIVERWALK Promenade is inspired by Singapore's Clarke Quay area, filled with shopping and dining spaces.

LIFESTYLE Parenting

# How to deal with your son's picky eating habits

By Margarita P. Locsin-Chan
Contributor

MY SON is a picky eater.

Unlike his overweight parents, he is classified just below the median weight for his height and, unlike us again, has no qualms about missing meals to have at playing with his toys, iPad, or snacking his favorite 85-5 calcium.

Being of Asian descent, and Filipino-Chinese in particular, the grandparents are concerned that our preemie kid a skinny.

Thankfully, I had a pediatrician in London (where we were still based when) who dispelled that theory and told me not to mind the criticism and instead look for signs of healthiness (or unhealthiness) in my picky eater: vitality.

Of course, despite my "perks" of size, I would still fret about my son's lack of interest in food and wouldn't help but feel like a failure whenever he would stand with his chubbier and supposedly "more healthy" contemporaries.

It also didn't help that for some reason, my chunky little monkey would eat only in front of his grandparents and someone only when they gave him (and he would literally inhale the food they gave him, too!), which made me look even more like a horrid mother to my already horrified critics.

From talking to health professionals and other parents who told me that my toddler is still "okay," here are signs that should reassure you your kids are fine despite their apparent abstemious ways.

### They still drink their milk.

While formula is not a substitute for the goodness of real food, it does help picky eaters get adequate nutrition, particularly if like my son, they only like carbs, ice cream or veg.

My son can literally live on rice, pasta (with very plain, non-chunky tomato sauce) and biscuits, which all have very quickly in an overnotive list such as he, as I still insist on providing at least three to four bottles of milk a day—even if his teacher insists he not have them so he is forced to eat.

### They are still active.

My pedia never worried about Gabby's lack of interest in food, mainly because every time she saw him, he was active and happy. He often wouldn't keep him still for his health checks. He was now busy running her office into his playground.

His runs are bright, his cheeks rosy (although they were admittedly more in London) and he was the picture of health. In fact, many pediatricians don't recommend making your child see his (or mine) how cute they look in that

> Don't panic. At least, they're not candidates for obesity

state), as it predisposes them to heart disease and diabetes later in life.

### They show "some" interest in food.

While my son's food preferences doesn't adhere to an adult's understanding of real food, he still does look for food and when he does, is capable of polishing off a jar of oatmeal cookies in one sitting.

He also links his lips when he smells or sees something that catches his fancy, which leads me to conclude he does like to eat. It's just that he knows what he likes to eat and it's not necessarily what we think a good for him.

Because of my son's pickiness, I have also picked up some strategies to make him eat more, or at the very least, eat something (which is better than nothing), and thankfully, as of his last checkup was still in the median weight range and had grown by a few more centimeters.

### Invest in food scissors.

Granted you won't bring scissors on an airplane (which means you have to grapple with the silly plastic ones they have on board), a pair of kids' food scissors are every picky eater's parents' godsend because they help make cutting time less traumatic.

I discovered one of the reasons my son wasn't interested in food was that when he was faced with something was cumbersome or too large for his little mouth, he would just put the food back and lose interest.

When we started to cut food up into little bits, he would at least give the silverware arrange food a try and if we were lucky, that would be the start of a new food relationship!

### Work with their favorites.

Since my son likes white rice (and he is very specific about this) and white bread, I've learned to disguise food.

He likes vegetables, I order the steamed fish with soy sauce which I mix into the rice while we also my niece's favorite growing up) because he can't identify the fish in his spoons.

I've also learned to make red sauce with tuna and sausages, aside from the regular beef Bolognese. My son is, however, very adept at finding the "undesirable" bits in his food, so make sure to cut them up into the tiniest pieces so he thinks they're strange.

The thing about toddlers is that they have very short-term attention spans and so when it comes to food they like, what they like to eat one day they may completely reject the next. Hence, I never buy too much of his current favorites because they only end up going to waste (or to his mom and dad's waist!).

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SMCI PR account officer Samantha Sanchez and Kraft Foods Phils. category manager Ana Dee Federis

MASTER Joseph Chua prepares for the New Year blazing with SMCI accounting head Josefina Marilang and SMCI business development, marketing and liaison portfolio head Pan Gonzales

7-ELEVEN Phils. marketing director Michael Dasuncion, R&B Food Products founder Michael Kho, Jayne Yao, Gek Cinajaw and Virginia Mge

ALVEO Land Corp. sales and marketing team Jessica Dee, Dominga, Beverly Diaz, Nida Gamboa, Patricia Dee, Charlene Chua and Janet Bringas

BRAND Galvez, managing director of SMCI, Joseph Chua, popular pianomancy expert Johnson Ongking, VP of Beyaz Philippines and Zuner Marilang, director for PR and communications of SMCI

SMCI PR account officers Cecily Manzal and Avery Quimen (second from right) with Julian Fowler, deputy manager for fundraising and communication of Wyland Foundation, and external communication officer Maria Pearsall

SMCI'S hardworking gang: Michael Co, content and creative director Charlie Bello, HR officer Carla Rae Jose and executive assistant Jackie Morales

DARREL Phils. marketing assistant Lianne Santiago, marketing manager of Havaianas Phils., Terry Sit, and Andrew Sia

JAZMIN dela Cruz, Hasro Darrel marketing manager, and Alexa Buenviaje

JACQUE Ruby, Phil. rep. of Discovery Channel Asia, Johnson Ongking, VP of Beyaz Phils. and Vanessa Sarmiento, PR account officer of SMCI

# PR firm celebrates 10 years, Pinoy pianist shines in New York

IT'S BEEN 10 awesome years for to-do-based PR and social marketing agency Grimer Mackay Marketing Communications, Inc. (GMC). To celebrate its first decade, the company hosted a fun Luzon Tour bash in its ultra-modern new office, dahlings.

The company operates in the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia, servicing businesses in a variety of industries...from real estate to fashion, food and pharmaceuticals. It's been organizing the likes of some of the most exceptional marketing and PR activities ever seen, including Bayan Ibiza Lube Series campaign, Tolentino's featured Thank You Tour and, right, Talmak FLOSH (Your Ultimate Mouthwash) campaign.

Photos by Khris Yam Hingco

The latter campaign broke a Guinness World Record and showed off Filipinos' culinary talents when it created 1,043 cheese-inspired dishes. Now, palengges, that really deserves a toast!

Having a blast at the anniversary party were GMCI's clients representing hotshot companies such as shoes Land Corp., Discovery Channel Asia, Hermanos Philippines/Tecnis SA, Kraft Foods Philippines, Beyaz Philippines, Wellness Foundation, RDF Foods Corp. (makers of the yummy snack Boy Bawang) and Meiji Dairies, to name drop only a few.

There was a buffet with tons of food, eye-catching décor and a special blessing by Internet gossiping expert Master Joseph Chua, followed by a dragon dance, natch!

MYLENE Lu and Jane Co of Guaranteed Lyzol Tan of Phoenix Phils.

SHIRELINE product marketing head for mobile phone Cora Domingo and head for trade marketing Lyn Tan

SHIRELINE'S Lawrence Pedrajas, Iridium's Dax Tuaz, Daniela Diaz of Unival and Ivan Alca of Phoenix Phils.

HILARIOUS Marayan, Dr. Vicki Belo, Gloria Alcazar and Gemma Ledesma

CRISTALLE Navarro and Councilor Carl Lopez

HILARIOUS Marayan, ASAPP Board of Trustee Tina Lopa, presidential sister Pinky Aquino-Abadilla, Dr. Vicki Belo, DepEd superintendent Rowena Ledesma, NYC Foundation president Milla Kilayko and Alexander Diamante

CV RANGE Elementary School preschool pupils and Pinky Aquino-Abadilla

CV RANGE Elementary School preschool pupils welcoming the VIP guests with a song

SHINELINE executives Glen Gloriga, SEPCO Pres. KC Park, CFO Philip Lee, advisor for Samsung Mobile Michael Clinton (far right) and Highest Growth Awardees Anthony Wan of Abscom (center)

WILLIAM Co of Philatcom

CONCERT pianist Jonkarney Emmanuel Cruz playing at Mikonsky Hall, Manhattan School of Music

7-ELEVEN Phils. junior marketing specialist Sian Sanchez and marketing manager Christine Habacon

HAAGEN-DAZS Phils., SM Foreshore marketing

MARKETING manager of Kenyalene Phils.: Terry Sit, Bonnie de Leon

FRENCHOICE, pupil Sophia Kay Candelaria and Dr. Vicki Belo

PIANO prodigy Jonkarney Emmanuel Cruz

PIANO prodigies Solomon Mikowsky (back row – fourth from left) with 11 of his most gifted students: Gustavo Diaz (Spain), Wael Farouk (Egypt), Simone Dinnerstein (US), Kunihiro Hong (Korea), Ivana Stefanovik (Gibraltar), Jun Yongwook Yoo (Korea), Inah, Ran Chung (China), Young Ha Kim (Korea), Yoon Chung (China), Kirti Devraimo (Russia), our very own Jonkarney E. Cruz and Alexander Tsoulfas (Russia)

Sonia Soto
Lifestyle Editor

# Our fiestas can be as much fun as Disneyland

LAST WEEK, my toddler saw an ad on the Disney Channel for Disneyland, Hong Kong. One 30-second advertisement was all it took for her to spend the next three days asking me to take her to Disneyland.

I watched my brain trying to think of an alternative for her, when suddenly it hit me. Why travel so far away when the best quarter of the year is always the Philippine fiestas? It was about time for the Kaamulan Festival in Bukidnon!

We quickly made plans, and what ensued was a must-see action-wonderful Adriana and I flew from Manila to Cagayan de Oro, and soon we were whisking into the land of the cowboys.

The Kaamulan Festival celebrates the heritage and culture of the seven indigenous tribes of Bukidnon. Since it is the home of our country's finest cowboys (yes, I'm biased), one of my favorite parts of the festival is the rodeo.

Just like in the movies, we saw cowboys from different ranches showing after the bulls with their lassos and trying to take them down. Closer to the bulls made their own quick escape by jumping over the fence and back into the corral, much to the amusement of the crowd.

### Cowboys with style

Of course, what rodeo is complete without the bull-riding contests? We watched cowboy after cowboy attempt to ride a wild bull from one end of the field to the other, without getting thrown off. It's not just about holding on for dear life, though; the cowboys have to do it with style—that is, with one hand on to their rope while the other hand waved to the crowd, which had my daughter happily waving back!

Since it was a fiesta, the day quickly turned into night, and the markings and apparitions gathered to unwind over drinks and music.

In another part of the Capitol grounds, the Kaamulan kicked off that night with a preview of next day's festivities. Some of the dancers were there, dressed in colorful dresses and beads. My favorite part was the choir singing tribal songs with beautiful interpretative dancing. Even my shaman-in-training couldn't help but sing along and dance with her hips, as she watched the dancers and listened to the talented choir.

I couldn't help but think that if monks have their own best-selling CDs of Gregorian chants, my shaman-in-training could have her own musical indigenous people. It would be a chance not to conceal their moving hymns and chants now before they disappear forever.

We headed back as soon as the festivities were over. We needed sleep, as we had an early day ahead of us. Sure enough, by 6:30 a.m., the drums were sounding through the streets and the music booming into our rooms. We quickly got dressed and ran down to catch the street dancing/theater parade.

The streets were packed with spectators taking pictures of bright costumed and graceful dancing, as well as the floats in the parade. Even painstakingly built just for the fiesta. The parade made its way to the Kaamulan grounds, where the dancing continued.

Each dance tells an epic story from a particular tribe, which is a fantastic way of sharing beautiful legends and stories that make up their cultural history. From street dancing, it becomes a form of street theater. I recognized the stories behind the dances as my daughter so she could understand better.

The afternoon was spent walking around the grounds filled with hoards of local products. There were also chefs and eateries serving delicious native fare, while kids ran around the field and parents spread picnic cloths on the ground. It dwarfed, but it was perfect for cooling everyone after the warm morning.

### Hundreds of lanterns

Saturday night was when the city showed that it knows how to party. And how! It was magical to watch hundreds of lanterns lit and released into the dark night sky to celebrate the anniversary of the province.

My daughter thought we had entered the kingdom of Rapunzel. Even "Tangled," and watched until the last lantern disappeared from sight.

Shortly after, a countdown began, and the skies was ridden with fireworks. My daughter, with other children old enough to appreciate them, squealed with delight as every explosion of color made the night sky come alive.

The fireworks signaled the start of the much-awaited concert, which this year brought Feng Cosmovision and Parokya ni Edgar to the people of Bukidnon. Soon, everyone was rocking to the music. Well, except me and my little boys, who promptly told me it was time to go home. And so off we went, exhausted but thrilled with everything we have seen.

As a parent, I know how much effort we put into entertaining our kids and choosing them all the wonderful things in life. With the advent of budget trips to countries that advertise their child-friendly attractions, it has become so much easier to take children abroad.

But we needn't even venture beyond local attractions and fiestas. We also lose out on the chance to help our kids learn more about the different cultures we have in our own country.

If we look around us, there is so much to offer our kids. From the whole shades of Dumaguete to the excitement dancing in parades nationwide, there's more than enough here to match Disneyland!

*The Department of Tourism has a schedule of fiestas/festivals all year round.*

Audrey Ann Zubiri
Contributor

MOMSPEAK

Write us your story!
lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

THE KAAMULAN Festival also features the Pinoy version of the rodeo

Why travel so far away? At the Kaamulan Festival in Bukidnon, my daughter was entertained by cowboys, parades and fireworks

## How to deal with your son's picky eating. . .

It's a package deal

### Eat with your child.

In today's busy world, it's too easy for us to come home from work hurting inside for grinded that our kids have been fed by the yaya.

Since I went back to work, I noticed that my son would often eat again with me when I got home and so now, I make it a point to try to make it home by dinnertime and if I don't, I ask him to join me at the table for my late meal.

### Get involved in their meals.

Do you really know if or when your child is hungry for? I didn't since my son started, and so I was mortified to discover a few weeks back that my nanny was feeding him a mustard-dunny mixture of egg and chicken noodle soup.

I'd told her to make spaghetti, and so I presumed that she wasn't feeding my son when I found the exact opposite in the fridge.

Apparently, my son just keeps asking for chicken noodle soup and so the nanny scans, adding egg to the instant noodle mixture for protein, but pairing only half of the seasoning because she felt it was a waste since he wasn't going to eat it all anyway.

I realized like eggs clubhouses and while I was angry at first, I had to acknowledge that she was doing her best to feed a picky eater.

Since that revelation (hello, there is a steady supply of homemade chicken soup in the freezer, that is mixed in small containers and defrosted daily, regardless of whether he eats it or not.

While that may seem wasteful, I am of the belief that when it comes to my son and his health, I will never scrimp (and really, it is more expensive to pay for a hospital stay than it is to just defrost old food anyway).

Incidentally, that is something I learned from having household help this past year. They didn't actually know that defrosted food cannot be returned to the freezer.

I suppose educating your household help that defrosted food cannot go back in the fridge may cause food poisoning, so it's not worth the hassle to risk just to save money. Teach them to store in small containers according to your child's consumption and to just defrost as needed. In fact, they shouldn't be doing the same for themselves and for you, too!

# Toy Kingdom makes a splash with fun water toys and accessories

**H2SEE** clip, ear plugs and goggles (with case)

**DORA** the Explorer inflatable chaise ring pool

**MAKE** a grand sand castle with this crab and shell beach playset

**INFLATABLE** pool with the aquatic design

TOY KINGDOM summer lets you and your family have a splash right in your own backyard with its collection of inflatable fun.

There are inflatable swimming pools in fancy shapes and designs for hot summer days. If you're headed for the beach or pool, Toy Kingdom also offers sweatshirts and toys for a great time.

Inflatable rafts, boats, ride-ons and other flotsam are great for cruising in the pool while goggles, swim caps and dive toys will help aspiring swim champs. There are also swim masks and snorkel sets for exploring underwater; squirters and water guns for safe water fun; body boards and skim boards for water adventures; and even electric sled pool playsets for beach fun; and swim rings, armbands and life vests to keep kids safe.

Find Toy Kingdom Express in all Department Stores and at Toy Kingdom branches at SM Makati, The Podium, Ayala, SM Megamall, SM Southmall, SM City Fairview, The Block at SM City North Edsa and the SM Mall of Asia's Main Mall and Kids Universe. In the provincial areas, there are located at the SM Supermalls in Batangas, Manila, Baguio, Cagayan de Oro and Davao in the Mainit area. Also visit our website at www.toykingdom.ph

**IMPROVE** your swimming skills while having fun with these dive aquatic balls

**ANIMAL LIFE** rings for the little ones

**POOL** cruisers with car, plane and fish designs

**THE PAVILO** family will have a ride of fun hanging in this inflatable above-ground pool.

## Ideal kiddie meal containers, bowls

BOON baby products

BOON baby products are gnome-ized and BPA-free.

Snack Ball takes care of snacks on the road. It's a handy and sphere-shaped container with a rigid horn that prevents snacks from getting crushed, making it ideal for travel.

The Fluid takes care of keeping kids hydrated with water or juice so they become sooner. It has an ergonomic two-hand grip designed for small hands, and an angled spout that requires less tipping for less spills.

The Catch Bowl is perfect for first-time eaters, to control spills with its built-in food catcher.

The Saucer is the stay-put divided plate with slip-resistant base and edgeless design, to keep kids from lifting it off the table.

The Grassy measurable, keeps tots engaged in their meal with customizable rim designs.

Lastly, the Squeeze spoon and baby food dispenser rests with a spoon cover to keep food intact between feedings.

Boon baby products are available in all Rustan's Department Stores, BabyGuard, and www.toysmall.com. Visit the Boon Philippines fan page on Facebook.

# Fun with your kids

## This week, sing and make rice crispy sundaes

By Pam Pastor

**Sing**

**What:** Who says karaoke is just for adults? Take your kids out for an afternoon or evening of music and singing.

**How:** Pick a place, make reservations, go and grab the mic.

**Where:** There are a number of kid-friendly karaoke places in the country. Our pick is Red Box in Greenbelt.

**When:** 3 p.m.-7 p.m., the rate is P299. That comes with two drinks and free room use.

**Why you'll love it:** You'll see your hearing your kids belt out their favorite songs. And you'll have fun singing, too.

**Why your kids will love it:** Because they will love a lot of fun.

**Why it's good for them:** Singing in front of other people can help develop their confidence. Plus, it's a great way to discover their talents. You never know, maybe you've discovered the country's next Big pop star in your family.

**Make 'rice krispie' sundaes**

**What:** Put together two kid-friendly favorites—rice krispie treats and ice cream sundaes.

**How:** Melt butter in a saucepan, add marshmallows and mix until they melt. Pour rice krispies into a bowl and pour the melted marshmallows and butter mixture over them.

Mix until the rice krispies are covered. Press the mixture into a pan that has been buttered or lined with wax paper. Cut the rice krispie treats into pieces big enough to hold a scoop of ice cream. Put one rice krispie treat on a plate or bowl, add a scoop of ice cream, add bananas and drizzle with chocolate syrup or top with Nutella. Eat.

**Where:** Your kitchen

**What you'll need:** A box of rice krispies, a bag of marshmallows, two tablespoons of butter, ice cream, bananas, chocolate syrup or Nutella

**Time out:** 30 minutes

**Cost:** Around P600.

**Why you'll love it:** Because it's easy to do in the kitchen with your kids—a great opportunity for bonding.

**Why your kids will love it:** Because these sundaes are easy to make and are so delicious.

**Why it's good for them:** They can explore creativity with food when they make their own sundaes. This is also a good way to teach them food preservation.

# Bankers' group hosts 26th national convention, marks 70th anniversary

THE BANKERS Institute of the Philippines hosts its 26th National Convention at Tirol Palace Hotel, Tagaytay City on March 13-20, in conjunction with the celebration of Bankpil's 70th year.

The Convention is a biennial event held out-of-town in attractive beach or mountain destinations within Manila, and invites the staff of their branches and other points in or near the general and technical sessions covering a wide range of topics. They can also view the gallery of exhibits and innovative product presentations installed by the banking service providers and suppliers specializing in information technology, software solutions, applications and telecommunication solutions.

The convention aims to bring together 300 members of the private from Metro Manila and provinces and provide them with a venue for enhanced learning on the developments and updates that have impact and relevance on the banking industry.

Held under the auspices of the Board and the National Convention Committee, the nine-and-a-half day convention has been packed with general and technical sessions on topics ranging from both government and private sectors' views and outlook on the banking industry to the role of good governance and the judiciary in economic progress; PERA vs. RA8424 entrepreneurship; telco industry trends in the Philippines; even spiritual awareness and corporate and employee well-being.

All of these topics aim to contribute to the members' professional development, social responsibility and general well-being.

Prominent corporate sponsors and exhibitors have contributed their booth space for display and promote the latest technologies for banking products and related services; 33 of which have taken all available slots for the Platinum and Gold sponsorship categories.

The Convention will not be complete without the fellowship activities that not only provide fun and respite from the serious topics, but also strengthen the bonds among the members.

On March 18, there will be a gastro night, while the March 19 fellowship will have the theme "Bright Days Ahead," highlighting the Institute's 70th or diamond year. Exciting prizes will be raffled off throughout the convention period.

Institute officers also have extended to the Chamber of Thrift Banks and the Rural Banks Association of the Philippines.

# Higher penalty proposed for cell-phone use while driving

By Linda B. Bolido

THE RECENT collision between two light rail trains should hopefully spur legislators to support a bill that would make it a criminal offense to use cellular phones while driving.

According to reports, an investigation of the incident showed that one of the operators was distracted by his cell phone—and was speeding, too. Fortunately, the trains were empty so nobody was injured.

I hope the trains were not actually occupied to be out of commission for a while, considering the volume of passengers that take the Light and Metro Rail. I hope, too, that repair would not cost a lot.

Rep. Scott Ejip of the second district of Tarlac cited statistics gathered by the Philippine Global Road Safety Partnership and the Philippine National Police that showed that, between 2008 and 2009, accidents resulting from the use of cell phones rose 300 percent, from 79 to 317.

Although Ejip's bill is just one of several that have been filed in Congress, here imposes a higher penalty—P3,000-15,000 or imprisonment of at least one year. Other bills only set a fine of P1000.

The efforts to curb the use of cell phones by drivers are certainly welcome. Let us just hope this does not provide fodder for enforcers another "income-generating" activity.

### BSP explains

The Cash Department of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas responded to a query by a reader about what the government is doing to increase the number of establishments that give customers their exact change.

Director Violeta T. Mejia, officer-in-charge of BSP's currency management sub-sector, said the institution was taking every step to ensure establishments had enough supply of coins for change.

THE CONSUMER
Linda B. Bolido

"For 2011, some 1.1 billion coins of various denominations would be minted for release to the banks on a staggered basis to accrue the public's requirements for coins. This will further augment the coins already in circulation which, as of 31 December 2010, is about 16,315 billion pieces, amounting to P16.21 billion. Of this total, 66 percent consists of lower denominated coins."

But, Mejia said, while the BSP distributes new coins every year to meet the requirements of the economy, demand remains unfilled in many parts of the country "because coins are not being re-circulated or used regularly by the public."

They are, instead, kept in piggy banks, made into jewelry, or thrown away—considered as an inconvenience.

"The low regard toward low-denominated coins is one of the main reasons coins are not circulating efficiently," she said.

### Not enough

Meanwhile, SM Retail Inc., through its president, Jorge T. Mendiola, said the supply of coins is never enough, despite the efforts of BSP and commercial banks. In the case of SM, he said the company had launched programs like Public Barya, which encouraged the public to have their coins converted into paper bills at SM stores.

Mendiola said they had also partnered with various groups, including schools and churches, to collect coins. At the same time, he said, store frontliners like cashiers and checkers are also instructed to handle customers better each time, if they are unable to give exact change, customers would not feel they had been taken advantage of.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 1000 Chino Roces Ave. ext. Makati City, fax 897-8783-90; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph.

# ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Erwin G. Velasco
Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment | E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Send us your feedback. Anyone can leave a text message to 0917

## It's Ciara– no one else

SINGER-ACTRESS Ciara Sotto jests that the pole is her new favorite dance partner. She first tried competitive pole dancing in Las Vegas in Manila, she started studying with Madrinis and Myla Tan and Lala Ilao of Movement Dance Studio a year ago. Ciara won the celebrity edition of "Talentadong Pinoy" last November and will compete in the grand finals on March 13. She put the skill to good use again when she played Mimi in 9 Works Theatrical Productions "Heat" recently. She recommends pole dancing as a fun way to keep fit. "It tones muscles, exercises the abs, develops strength and stamina," first of all, she said. "It works out the mind as well. It's liberating. It'll help shed inhibitions. Not dancing in the parochial manner, but don't even touch a part of it."

Bayani San Diego Jr.

## LT says no to stress

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ACTRESS Lorna Tolentino revealed that some plot twists in her latest ABS-CBN soap, "Minsan Lang Kita Iibigin," a tollway drama, hit too close to home.

Some scenes had to be rewritten because they were eerily similar to the subject of ongoing succession hearings on corruption in the military, she explained.

Now, that's stressful.

She is glad that she gets to play a "complicated" woman here (a soldier's wife and a general's daughter). "I don't want to be a martyr forever," LT said. "Great thing is, my character is not the usual kontrabida."

As a bonus, she gets to make good friend Amy Austria "suffer" on the set. "I'm at ease because Amy is a generous costar. I'm sure she still gets me the right emotions to bounce off in one scene/another," said LT.

She has had to skip Bikram yoga sessions due to the marathon taping schedule of "Minsan." What she gets to do, to keep her sanity, is escape to a farm in Cavite.

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPPH

BY JES ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY

BY PH_LOGOS

DICK TRACY

LOVEBIRDS

BY ELIZABETH HOROWOLD

BABY BLUES

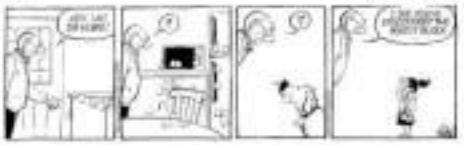
BY JERRI SCOTT

RIKO MACHINE

BY MARK ABRERA

SEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON




MUTTS

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN

BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDOK

BY MARA COLL

## HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19)** You're so restless today that it's hard to sit still. You're definitely up for a trip to your favorite sports activities as soon you can. Don't sit at home today moping!

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** Friends, especially a group of them, will surprise you today. Somebody might ask you something that is out of the ordinary. Or perhaps you will meet someone who is a real character. It's hard to say.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** Frugal, a few surprises from loved ones, parents, teachers and VIPs. As a result, you might feel rebellious. Nevertheless, don't act on your ills.

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** Surprising opportunities to invest, take a course or get further education might not help your fortune today. Since the window of opportunity will be brief, you will have to act quickly!

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)** Unexpected gifts, goodies and money might come your way today. In some manner, you will definitely will benefit from the wonderful and generous of others.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)** Conversations with partners and close friends will be interesting today. Expect surprises and/or unpleasantness. In fact, somebody might want change, and/or oppose recent trends or developments.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)** You're full of wild ideas. A new, maybe even brilliant, idea catches on or make money on the side, how to get a better job or how to establish new partnerships. Trust your creative decisions.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)** Unexpected freedom might be your cloud today. However, this is an excellent opportunity for procrastinators, to be short.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)** Surprise romance might drop by today. Possibly, repeated campers could be a promise. Something unexpected will take place on the home front.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)** This is an excellent time to take the bull by the horns. Therefore, show power and take charge. Be sure you do everything so that you don't feel inferior or second.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)** Today you are full of ideas. Yet, maybe even brilliant, ideas which fail to make money on the side, how to get a better job or how to establish new partnerships. Trust your creative decisions.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)** You have a strong desire to be free and independent today. You want to do your own thing. Procrastinators don't mind others calling the shots today.

## CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

**HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU**

Fill the grid so that each row, column, and every 3×3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs visit www.sudoku.com

Concepts Sudoku — By Dave Green

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 5 | | | | 9 | | |
| 6 | | | 8 | | 7 | | | 1 |
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| | | 7 | | | | 6 | | |
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| | 9 | 6 | | | | 5 | 2 | |
| | | 2 | | | | 4 | | |
| | 5 | | 2 | 6 | 3 | | 8 | |
| | 6 | | | | | | 7 | |

Difficulty Level ★★★

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

# LT says...

From page E1

"It was originally a poultry and pineapple farm," Lorna told the buyers during her 11th anniversary bash as endorser of Crystal Clear purified drinking water. "But my partners and I are studying the possibility of planting organic vegetables, herbs and spices."

## Future spa

LT dreams of turning the farm into a spa and opening her own water refilling station in Tagaytay, near the farm. "I've always wanted to go into business," she noted. "I first met with the owners of Crystal Clear after finishing my entrepreneurship course in UP in 1999."

Another item unrest for LT is her job as co-manager to actor Ralph and Rom. "I consult with my friend/who-are-also-talent managers, Mr 'Step Aside Divided and Tito Sotto…[illegible], when I have questions," she said.

That's a labor of love, Lorna explained. "I don't get a commission for the loan processed in Step a house and see for one in the future."

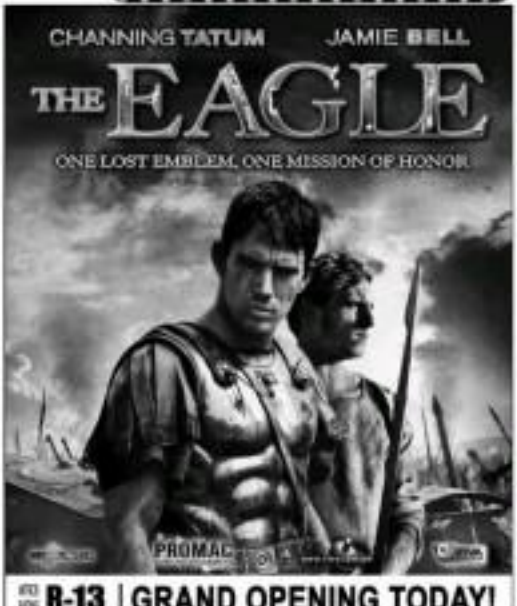
## Priority

A priority project is finding a permanent home for late husband Rudy Fernandez's memorabilia.

The plan is to turn a small space in Quezon City owned by the Fernandez clan, into a mini Dahoy Fludy's pet name] museum.

"Dahoy was very organized. To left 12 suitcases of his stuff: posters, pictures, costumes, scripts, letters—all neatly labeled," Lorna said. "That's why we didn't have school any looking for old photos when friends request for them."

LT and her family recently celebrated Dahoy's birthday (March 3) with a Mass and merienda at the farm.



# The story behind two celebrity breakups

MY SCOOP on the breakup of actress/TV host Angel Aquino and former TV personality turned businessman Jed Madela, which came out in the columns a few weeks ago, is over the talk of the town.

Let her finish crying to get in touch with me to air his side, and I heard he's kind of bitter. Angel is a close friend so I didn't want to aggravate matters.

I was told that Jed admitted to Kid Mercado over one-on-one interview (to be aired on Sunday in our show) that he still loves Angel and hopes she's happy.

But if Jed really means what he said, he should just zip it. It's so unprofessionally of him to be talking about the moment now mas-in-angel-la life.

Sumasow close in the "new guy" let me in on the real score: "The guy has a longtime GF whom Angel has met. Mind you, he's an HOH. Manako dito, manako doon. Ayaw pa rin mali-suspected as him of work-wife. So, he doesn't deserve to be dragged into the mess. Besides, what he and Angel has is a platonic relationship. He just helps her out and gives her gifts because that's his nature. He's really galanter with all his close friends. He makes (random). Perhaps Lei just got insecure, that's why now he is resorting to spreading crazy stories about Angel and the guy."

**Dolly Wood**
*Dolly Anne Carvajal*

Beneath Angel's diva image is a simple and down-to-earth woman. I can vouch for that because I used to hang out with her when she was still with her then-boss BF Montreal wealth to commercial to her. You can count on her even when there is no money to count.

So it's really unfair that some people are making it seem like she's out to get what she can get from a rich admirer/friend. She's always in fashion but being a material girl has never been her style.

**Pampi speaks**

The rumored separation of Judy Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo has been the hottest whisper for quite some time now. So many "tsismis" about their breakup are splashed on the tabloids.

Finally, Pampi clears up the issue via his statement which he conveyed to us on TV 5's "Pinapasikat." Here goes:

"Inamin ko sa ang pagsasama nating mag-asawa ay kumukupas dumadaan sa isang matinding pagsubok. Isang pagsubok na sa pinagdaanan naming mabubuti na mahirap, ding-sining at among mah ni kapwa pumalya. It has been seven months since we already parted ways. We would have maintained that silence until we resolve the issue about the marriage when the media, and totally unforeseen repercussions ere.

"I particularly would like to take exception to accusations that our situation came about solely out of my wrongdoing.

Sa mga nagsipagsuri sa pangkabuhayan: Ito ng kwento ang aking sinimu, naghahanap po kayo. Hindi ito po nagpapasa na marami ng beses, ito na kung ayaw ang sa aking sinabi. Hindi po makakatulong at aming hulagpuan ang pasalamat sa

king pansing. Sa hulp, ng dinalot kanang nyog daging ito pasabi, di lamang sa kabuhan ni Judi, kundi pati na rin sa aw ang mod mo at Thirdy.

At ngayon, wala na pang ibang mahalaga at akin dandang magpatuloy kasabikasan ng aking anak. Dersiar akong umasa sa inyong patuloy at pang-unawa.

It's bad and sad enough when a marriage ends. All the more if the couple is subject to public scrutiny. So let's spare Pampi and Judy adolescent anguish and let them pick up the pieces quietly. A broken celebrity marriage is always headline material, but we should not be desensitized by all the sensationalism to be amused to the sound of two hearts breaking.

**'SupremoMOM'**

Sporting a fresh look, "Full Time Mother" continues to be the talk-variety show for and about mothers from all walks of life, now on its new home (Sunday, GMA News TV (weekdays, 3 p.m.). Hosted by Christine Jacob-Sandejas and Suzi Entrata-Moreno, it has now more area as seen in its OBB—the hosts having fun with scenes of different motherhood as they perform their many roles in their journey as supermoMOMS.

PERSONAL: Thanks from the bottom of my heart to my dear friend and fab stylist/pr mom, Marisol Leiva-Panglilinan, for taking time out to be a guest speaker at the "Love, Courtship and Marriage" seminar of my stepdad, Gene Tagaza's Jesus The Nazarene Lamb Church. Married was born to be a blessing.

E-mail: wazzzup@abs-cbn.com

ENTERTAINME

# Suspicious wifey tails hubby abroad

LIVID with jealousy, TV Host took an unplanned trip. She wasn't supposed to travel with Handsome Husband, but she heard that Pinoy thrusaire had infiltrated the VIP entourage.

TH suspected that FE had been eyeing HH for a while. Territorial as she is, both at work and at play, TH dropped everything and sailed HH throughout the jetliner. Alas, she couldn't stay too long away from Mont St. Shu let's BE unchaperoned . . . with FE who, she is sure, is a predator.

Tales not to know one.

**Two out of three**

Adventures were heard complaining about client restrictions.

The company has three Celebrity Models, all beautiful and popular, but two of them are a pain to work with.

CH 1 is a notorious prima donna, but OM2 is supposed to be a pro. Has OM2 picked up bad habits from Hunky Partner, who is touched by his showy curse?

The staff of the ad firm, however, has only kind words for CM3, who is punctual and courteous to everyone on the set.

**Flying mallet**

COCO Martin was asked to kick off a production organization's program at a posh venue. The task was quite simple: Hit the gong. A trained monkey could've done it, indeed.

So both would have it, when CO aimed for the gong, the mallet's head flew, time's stunned cartoonic laughter here. CO could only mutter, "Oops!" forlornly!

**Front act?**

Will the real owner please stand up? Intrigue swirlgers insist that Scandalous Personality's new vacation house really belongs to Controversial Politico.

SP purportedly agreed to front for CE to divert critics' attention away from the politician's unexplained wealth.

**No rumor-monger**

People will find the latest intrigue leaking

**Married Actress to Controversial Celebrity and Popular Politico hard to believe:**

But the scuttlebutt is persistent, echoing in TV studio hallways to the rumblers of power. It was the hot subject during a recent show biz party, too.

Conspiracy theorists suspect that MM Unspeakable Relative may be behind the wild gossip. An insider-denier bit, insisting that SH would rather go soul-searching than rumor-mongering.

**What floats his boat**

What floats Enchong Dee's boat?

Is it a blossoming romance with multi-talented actress or celebrity? The young actor played coy as entertainment writers grilled him—during his recent launch of celebrity endorser of JuliFree's Cake Flour and Watermelon Spritz Float—about who keeps his love life and career lively. "I'm just so happy I was asked for this endorsement on my birthday last year. It was a very uplifting gift," he said. Fans and small gamers who seem to like his brands got to try out high-flying action-like a bargain metropolitan, gravity-defying gadgets, and exciting-edge floating games on the Moa Kiosk.

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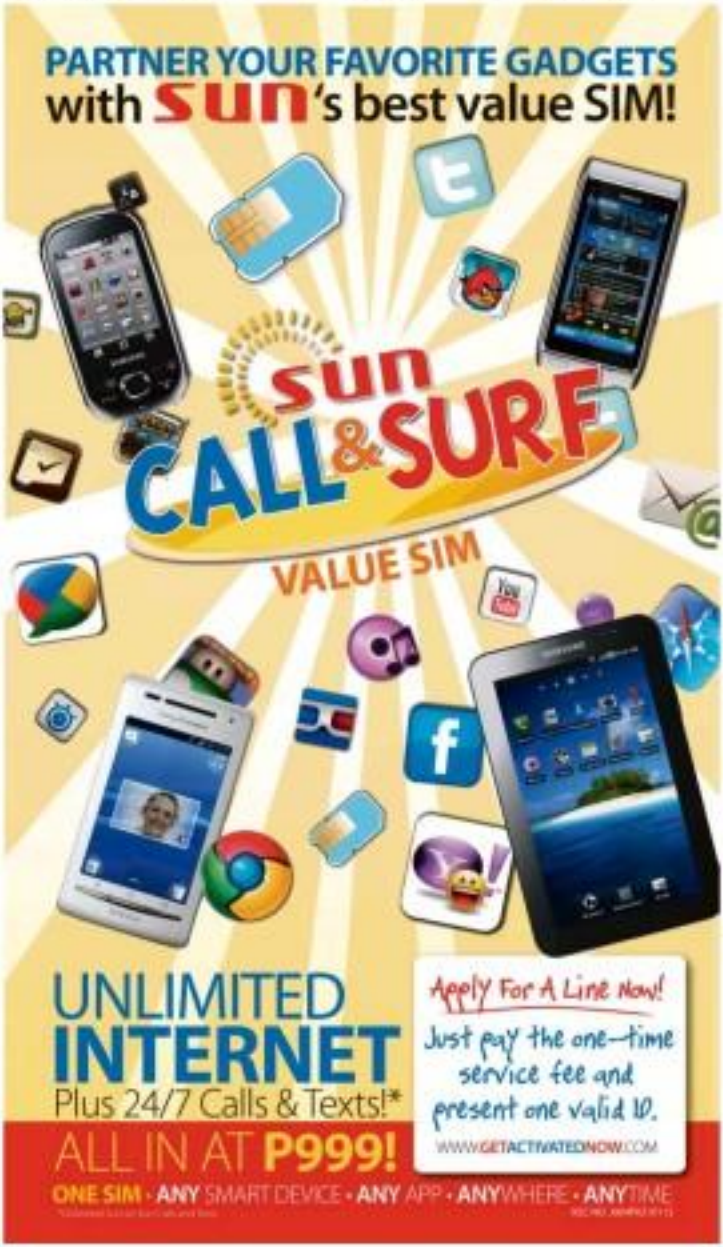

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# Suspicious wifey tails hubby ...


From page F1


### Top of the talk shows

Our three-ring mount last weekend's TV gabfests cited why we are revered, if we are revered:

▲Vilma Santos on Luis Manzano's hot exposure in his new movie with Angel Cuntic. "Who's that girl": "Mangyang dun na lang 'yun!" (Maybe because hers.)

▲Enchong Dee, asked about the real score between him and Erich Gonzales: "Talagang magkaibigan lang kami at hindi kami sobrang responsable sa 'min ng malaki."

MARCELITO Hay

### Standing ovation

"Pilipinas Got Talent" judges Kris Aquino, Ai Ai delas Alas, and Freddie M. Garcia gave the contestant a standing ovation. Gerlenie Marcellus Abas, 22, sang Regine Velasquez's version of "Starito Ako," hurling every high note prettied by Hosts Luis Manzano and Billy Crawford were blown away as well. Will Marcelito be the next guest minister? "PLT" airs Saturdays and Sundays, 8:45 p.m., on ABS-CBN.

ENCHONG Dee

TONI Gonzaga

sorrow. Ito, may nanalo'ng nanon pero." (Obvious family ever a problem.)

▲Maja Salvador, asked if she's committed to someone right now: "Sinong?" (Any passing man pwede.)

▲Angelica Panganiban on the debate being too "about her." (Nakakatawa ... hear na lang ng interview at hindi nagkaroon ng result na, at ilang taon dare na kaya sa pareto ... Huwag nating gawing sampung ... show ang pagbalewe ng kanilang pero maging artista." Eh, harsh.)

▲Phil Evangelista hand inside his hat on plans on entertainment: "My priority is football." (Well, he tried once, not so long ago.)

▲Jennica Yap on herself, indeed on Isabel Oli: "Kung hindi siya open. Mahe akong nilalagawan, nahe akong gaslitawan, nahe akong dinadate, dinate nilang single ako sa Kuhi na among hahanap maaliin si ka inspiring mine." (A note of shrew to goes a long, long way.)

▲Donald Anderson on former love team Kim Chiu. "She was my first love." (Sizling.)

▲John Lapus on Marian Rivera's name getting dragged into the mess involving him and Jobert Sucaldito: "Siyempre naiinis ako kay Marian ... wala na nang katuwaan nating ... Maging kaibigan ko lang." (Screwed was pero ok ba 'yun?)

▲Toni Gonzaga on why she doesn't have a Twitter account ... ("Wag na ito. Okay lang sa 'min.)

(E-Live, Marvelli, Pia Rina, Aberdin Gunvel, Allen Ambasyna, contributor)


PG-13

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SHANG
CINEPLEX
ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
RANGO (3D)
HOW DO YOU KNOW
BLACK SWAN
WHO'S THAT GIRL

MOVIE TIME
GLORIETTA 4
1: RANGO
2: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
3: WHO'S THAT GIRL
4: NEVER LET ME GO
5: SAW 6
6: THE EAGLE
7: HOW DO YOU KNOW?
GREENBELT 1
1: WHO'S THAT GIRL
2: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
GREENBELT 2
1: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
2: RANGO
3: HOW DO YOU KNOW?
4: I AM NUMBER FOUR
5: THE EAGLE
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
2: RANGO
3: THE EAGLE
4: HOW DO YOU KNOW?
5: WHO'S THAT GIRL
AYALA CENTER CEBU
1: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
2: RANGO
3: HOW DO YOU KNOW?
4: WHO'S THAT GIRL
MARQUEE
1: RANGO
2: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
3: HOW DO YOU KNOW?
4: WHO'S THAT GIRL
MARKET! MARKET!
1: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
2: RANGO
3: HOW DO YOU KNOW?
4: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6: WHO'S THAT GIRL
7: I AM NUMBER FOUR
TRINOMA
1: WHO'S THAT GIRL
2: THE EAGLE
3: I AM NUMBER FOUR
4: RANGO
5: HOW DO YOU KNOW?
6: SAW 6
7: THE ADJUSTMENT BUREAU
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## Opening This Week

**Senior Year**
Directed by Arnold Throp; stars Che Ramos, Dimples Romana, LJ Moreno, Ina Feleo, RJ Ledesma, Arnold Reyes, Ramon Bautista

Friends attend their high-school reunion and reminisce about their teen years. But of the independent section of last December's Metro Manila Film Festival, this drama was graded "F" by the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB) which hailed it as "a refreshing and welcome departure from the current candy, teen-scene clone-and-run by mainstream studios." The CEB singled out its "imaginative, insightful and well-paced direction and intriguing characters."

**How Do You Know?**
Directed by James L. Brooks; stars Reese Witherspoon, Jack Nicholson, Owen Wilson, Paul Rudd, Mark Linn-Baker

A sacked softball player (Witherspoon) is very between star athlete (Wilson) and beleaguered exec (Rudd). Steve Todisco's Archway Lane scheme "Everything looks primed for oldfired amusement, but . . . the laughs dissipated all." Financial Times' Nigel Andrews enthuses. "A rom-com with no mush, very and far too little cute." Washington Post's Ann Hornaday says it "succeeds as a culmination of moments that ring true and warm."

**The Eagle**
Directed by Kevin Macdonald; stars Channing Tatum, Jamie Bell, Donald Sutherland, Mark Strong, Tahar Rahimi, Brodie O'Brien

Boston Globe's Ty Burr (Tatum) explores the British soldier-noir to investigate the disappearance of the Ninth Legion. Philadelphia Inquirer's Carrie Rickey describes it as "beautifully entertaining . . . historical fiction." The Hollywood Reporter's Todd McCarthy agrees: "Engaging, if straightforward and one-dimensional." Village Voice's J. Hoberman sums it up as "a thunderous boys' adventure of the old-school type."

**Rango**
Directed by Gore Verbinski; with the voices of Johnny Depp, Abigail Breslin, Isla Fisher, Bill Nighy, Ned Beatty, Timothy Olyphant

Generally shameless (Depp) inventor of sociopathic lizard and music debuts a Western twist against enemies he can't handle. Time magazine's Richard Corliss is impressed by its "movie-wise fun and knockout animation style." El Dallas's Luke Y. Thompson points out: It proves "you don't need 3D to make CG pop." Rolling Stone's Peter Travers asserts:

"This is something David Lynch might have directed."

**Saw VI**
Directed by Kevin Greutert; stars Costas Mandylor, Tobin Bell, Betsy Russell, Shawnee Smith, Mark Rolston, Peter Outerbridge

Detective (Mandylor) inherits the sick legacy of serial killer Jigsaw (Bell), but the FBI is in hot pursuit. Bailey's Bob Strauss quips: "A film so frighteningly familiar it could well be called Saw 9 already." San Francisco Examiner's Beatrice Drake differs: Its "execution narrative . . . lies up the saggy loose ends." Dread Central's Steve Rubin thinks it's "able to extend on its own as a solid and fun old thrill ride."

**Red Riding Hood**
Directed by Catherine Hardwicke; stars Amanda Seyfried, Shiloh Fernandez, Gary Oldman, Julie Christie, Virginia Madsen, Max Irons

Young woman (Seyfried) suspects that her love (Fernández) is the werewolf that terrorizes her village. Sixteen reel observes: "There's more than a hint of Stella and Stanley (of "Twilight") in the lead characters. Hollywood.com reports that "Twilight" director "Hardwicke makes her way from vamps to werewolves." Movies.com calls it a "Gothic-tinged mashup of the classic fairy tale." Opera Prima

CLOCKWISE from left: Sue Prado and Jun Pervas; Ruffa Anne Rios, Ann Capri, Becky Salumbides and Funny Samsano; and Mercedes Cabral

# Pinoy indie to compete in US fest

By Marinell R. Cruz

THE TRILOGY "Camp na Bahay" ("Garden of Eve") will compete in the 2011 Indies International Film Festival in New York.

The festival, which celebrates the cutting edge of digital technology while honoring traditional forms of storytelling," runs April 15-20.

In a statement, IIFF cofounders Luis Feduron and Jorge Ibañez said leading figures of the film industry and local film enthusiasts are expected to attend the event.

"Camp na Bahay" salutes the plight of Filipino women in contemporary times via three stories directed by three women directors—Rico Ilarde, Ellen Ramos and Sarah Rose Li a premiere (Mercedes Cabral) resumes her search for since child, Israel 20 former children (Sue Prado) and Elena (Jane Perez) dare dream of better things, with Elena migrating to Japan as a mail-order bride; Ji Tan (Ilonna Sison Ren), a widow, falls in love with a younger man, Rodrigo (Rene Mallari).

"Camp na Bahay" was screened yesterday at the UP Film Center in Diliman, Quezon City. Two more screenings are scheduled tomorrow, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the Ateneo Theater in UP Los Baños for the benefit of Women's Day OIC as organization that trains women for livelihood programs.

The trilogy produced by Globe Productions Inc., was the opening film of the 2010 Cinemalaya independent film festival.

**4 awards for 'Tarima'**

Neal Tan's "Tarima" recently bagged four awards, including best picture, from the Tagaytay-type Handmade ng Animang-Filmmakers Cinefiesta.

"Tarima" is a multigenerational tale between the environment of romance and religious obligations. "Tarima" also won best director for Tan. Lead star Benny Servano received the best actor award.

Servano plays Nonoy who, is raised by a crowd patrolman boy (Christ Bonifacio, Pilar Mateo) who is sent to jail, finally finds its love with a reclusive inmate (Nicky Schmidtler).

Romero shared the best supporting actress award with actress Sheldon Cinco, who plays her loyal friend.

"I thought it was just a nomination," Servano told the Inquirer. "I was surprised when I received a congratulatory e-mail saying I was unanimously chosen for the award. I had to call Dods Neal to confirm."

The 9th Gawad Tanglaw ceremony will be held on March 17 at the Don Gregorio Aduana St. hall of the St. Dominic College of Asia in Bacoor, Cavite.

"Love Letter," by Japanese director Shunji Iwai, is the featured film in "Cloh Movie Pie Idiot's Guide to Heartbreak," scheduled from March 14 to 16, 9 p.m. at the Shopwise Cinematheque, Cubao Expo, Quezon City.

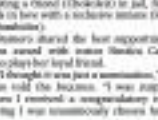
The film is about two women who, while mourning their lost lovers, discover new things about a man they both know once. Starring Miho Nakayama, "Love Letter" was a box-office hit in Japan in 1995 and later in South Korea. It was shot almost entirely on the island of Hokkaido.

Also in the lifeguard Cinemathequer, Khavn de la Cruz's "Mangatyan Kuba" will be screened March 17 at 9 p.m. The film is about Kuba, who along with his only friend, a amalan, embarks on a journey to look for his "missing heart." So twists several interesting characters along the way. The film is a part of the Hubert Bals Fund Spring Collection of 2009.

Admission is free.

E-mail: mcruz@inquirer.com.ph

# *TV mermaid shows make waves—literally*




WHAT IS IT about Filipinos that makes us such pushovers for stories about mermaids? Is it because the first "Dyesebel" movie, starring Edna Luna and directed by the theory the Lessa, was such a big hit and seminal influence on our film-mermaid psyches?

After Edna Luna, other screen goddesses, including Vilma Santos, have donned that signature fishtail (with the giveaway "inner brassiere") in the middle). Even the Miss Universe bet Johanna Rasmin played a mermaid in an underwater romp that also starred Dingaling!

**Localized variety**

Later, of course, "The Little Mermaid" also turned out to be a big hit, but the local or localized variety still holds sway on our big-and-small screens.

For good positive, the latest mermaid (already on the bike, ABS-CBN's "Mutya," is basically a Filipino variation.

And, not to be outdone, "Pilalo's Wish (Infanta)" ran an episode titled "Dyesebel," about a fat mermaid who grows legs and is transformed into new TV star Jessica Castillo (Chase's kid sister).

"Mutya" is pretty much par for the course as far as contrived stories go, except for the fact that its protagonist, 4-year-old Mutya Orquia, is a child mermaid. The role seemed to traditional practice, which runs subtle young-adult antennae to mermaid who to focus on their sensuous beauty, and, ah, maidenhead appeal.

Will "little goldfish" Mutya grow up to be a young woman? There's no hint of that happening, so the series could end up as no! growth, a mermaid production that doesn't exploit its heroine's innocence appeal and "revealing" projection.

What about Jessica Castle in "Dyesebel"—how does she fare in her first starring role on TV? She's lovely and eager to do well, but an ultra-early usage of her assets, the remuneration is not yet her own prowess as a performer.

With TV's backing, she will probably get a series of star-building projects, but it's still unclear at this point if her star will shine for the long term.

Why so? She's still young actor as a beautiful, "thrilled" but not independently creative and insightful thespian. Yes, she's still young, but other lovely actresses who launched their stellar career when they were really young, like Susan Roces, Amalia Fuentes and Hilda Koronel, had more going for them in terms of ability and charisma.

Where does that leave Jessica? She has a lot of exciting ups and growing up to do, because her fanatic are coming before she's good and ready for them.

She needs to be nurtured by the best directors so that all these good breaks will produce an authentic star, instead of an unprepared waste.

**Great villain**

To make things worse for Jessica, "Dyesebel" has a great, young villain in Kristel Marquez, who plays the lovely but nasty queen of their underwater world.

Kristel is such a strong and intelligent performer that, quite without her meaning to, she overwhelms and acts-thieving circles around sweet but phlegmatic Jessica.

Indeed, Kristel does so well in "Dyesebel" that it's clear that the dreadful Ondine must or soon in villain roles. After all, she's still in her mid-20s, so she should play bad roles—on it, until at least 40.

We hope that savvy makeovers or indie producers and directors will see the light in this regard and give Kristel the big, challenging protagonist roles her talent deserves.

**RAIN OR SHINE**

Canada's world-famous Cirque du Soleil (Circus of the Sun) is putting up its biggest tent called Grand Chapiteau (Big Top) for a series of performances starting June 21 to July 6 at Bicol Park, Manila. Standing six feet high, 147 feet in diameter and supported by four 80-foot masts, the blue-and-yellow Grand Chapiteau can accommodate about 2,000 spectators per show. The circus act, dubbed "Varekai," has been seen by over 11 million people worldwide. It features aerial, clown, adventure and acrobatics. Filipino performers interested to audition for certain parts may log on to the casting section of the Cirque web site at cirquedusoleil.com.